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THE NEW REPUBLIC ORTHODOXY

HAS COMMUNISM FOUND ITS REPLACEMENT?

BY JAMES H. BILLINGTON



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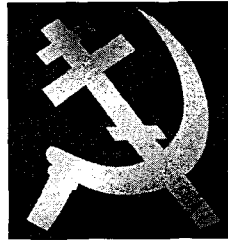
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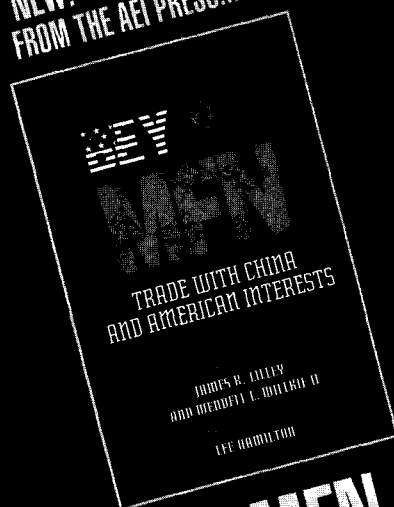


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CORRESPONDENCE

Wild about Harry

To the editors:

It is not surprising that Jeffrey Rosen belittles Harry Blackmun's "emotional jurisprudence" ("Sentimental Journey," May 2). Rosen is so enamored of legal craftsmanship, as he effete defines it, that he could not possibly appreciate Justice Blackmun's work.

Blackmun understood that a court without a conscience, with a head but no heart, is unequipped to administer justice. But he was no starry-eyed idealist. Through an attention to detail that Rosen curiously denigrates, Blackmun developed a sensitivity to the law's actual impact on people. Blackmun produced many fine opinions; perhaps the best, his "emotional" dissent in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, the Georgia sodomy case, Rosen strangely ignores.

The first Justice Harlan's outrage at racial injustice fueled an expansive view of the Fourteenth Amendment that ultimately became law, and Chief Justice Warren's innate sense of fairness helped make the Constitution a more meaningful charter of freedom. These were "emotional" judges of ordinary intellect and legal skill who tower in history above some of the great craftsmen. Their jurisprudence was no less "sentimental" than Harry Blackmun's.

PAUL ZAREFSKY
San Francisco, California

To the editors:

Jeffrey Rosen's assessment of Harry Blackmun's tenure on the Supreme Court is bewildering. Rosen decries what he calls Blackmun's "sentimental jurisprudence," and implies that Oliver Wendell Holmes and Benjamin Cardozo can be held up as models of justices who properly understood the need for a more rigorous style of legal reasoning.

Has Rosen forgotten that it was Holmes who finally condemned Carrie Buck, in the *Buck v. Bell* decision, to sterilization on the sentiment that "three generations of imbeciles is enough?" Or that it was Cardozo who sent Frank Palko, in his decision in *Palko v. Connecticut*, to execution because that justice declined to apply the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against double jeopardy to the states? Where does Rosen locate the "intellectually sophisticated craftsman[ship]" in these opinions?

I would suggest that instead of berating Blackmun for having "a big heart and the capacity to feel pain," we should all be

grateful that we had on the Court, especially during its most conservative era since 1937, someone who in fact could determine the human side of the law within a constitutional and legal setting.

JACK FRUCHTMAN JR.
Towson, Maryland

To the editors:

Jeffrey Rosen's charge that Harry Blackmun was not a great justice and betrayed his liberalism because he was "overly emotional," letting sentiment get the better of his reason, is a tired canard about what it means to think like a lawyer. As Hume said in *A Treatise on Human Nature*, "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."

Rosen may be more on the mark in criticizing Blackmun for sentimentality, meaning conventional rather than deeply felt emotion. *Roe v. Wade* might have been a better opinion if Blackmun had felt as committed to women's rights to self-determination in 1973 as he did by the time he announced his retirement (remember the oddity that *Roe* was as concerned with the rights of doctors as with the rights of women). Blackmun was at his best when passion drove his logic, as it did in two opinions often cited as his finest—his majority opinion in *Virginia State Board of Pharmacy v. Virginia Citizens Consumer Council* (protecting commercial speech) and his dissent in *Bowers v. Hardwick* (arguing for constitutional protection for private sexual acts). Reason served him well when he passionately defended his core liberal beliefs—that individuals have the right to control their destinies and to define their identities.

JEAN BRAUCHER
Cincinnati, Ohio

Ban roll-on

To the editors:

In "The Ban Plays On" (May 2), Hanna Rosin makes the following misleading or false assertions about American military justice.

(1) "Conversations with psychiatrists and clergy are not protected; in fact, professionals have a duty to report admissions of homosexuality." True, there is no recognized physician-patient privilege in trials by courts-martial; however, it is misleading to imply that this is unique to the armed forces. The rule is the same in the federal civilian courts; there is no general federal physician-patient privilege, absent state statute. The claim that there is no clergy-penitent privilege before trials by courts-martial is false. The clergy-penitent priv-

ilege has been recognized in such trials for many years.

(2) "Servicemembers in military courts are afforded few luxuries of civilian jurisprudence. There are no exclusionary rules, so evidence illegally obtained can be used, and refusing to answer questions is considered an admission of guilt." These assertions are categorically false. The exclusionary rule is embodied in the Military Rules of Evidence, and applies to evidence obtained by unreasonable searches and seizures and to the privilege against self-incrimination. No one may comment, in a trial by court-martial, on the accused's refusal to answer questions then or prior to trial, nor may any adverse inference be drawn from his refusal to testify or his pre-trial refusal to answer questions. Far from being the star-chamber implied in the essay, the system of military justice in the armed forces of the United States is one of the fairest and cleanest in existence.

SCOTT W. STUCKY
Washington, D.C.

Hanna Rosin replies:

The vast majority of discharges for homosexuality are administrative, and never reach a military court. Rules of evidence don't apply in administrative hearings, so the board hearing the case does not have to consider whether the evidence came from a priest, a serviceman bullied into confessing or an investigator without a search warrant.

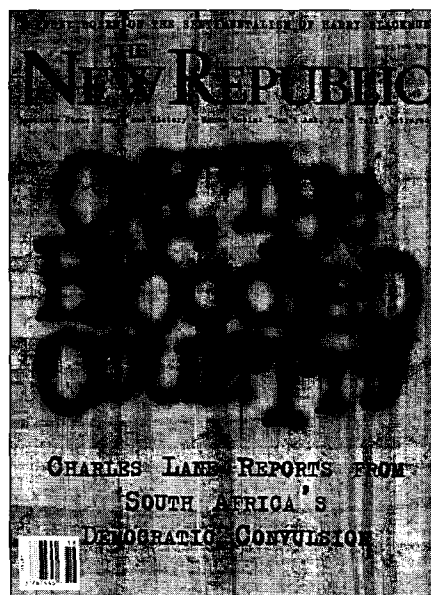
X man

To the editors:

As someone who grew up disaffected by the popular culture that we were always engulfed by, trying to be "punk" or "alternative" and more than anything trying to capture some sort of sense of generational unity, I can concur with Alexander Star (Washington Diarist, "Teen Spirit," May 2) that there was something distinct about Kurt Cobain. Yes, he was honest and genuine and simply did not wish to be a rock star. But Nirvana's ascendance to stardom symbolized something to many of us. Basically, we knew that this was it. We knew that we were never going to have a Bob Dylan or a Woodstock or a Vietnam, let alone an Oliver Stone to immortalize any of it long after the fact. And Kurt Cobain knew this as well. He was able to convey a rather simple and appealing message to the massive and disunified group that baby boomers are constantly trying to pigeonhole as some united "Generation X," while at the same time allowing us to realize that the whole affair really could not be taken seriously.

We recognized that in this age of decentralization and isolation via cable T.V., personal computers, etc., this was our last chance to have something in common with one another, even if it was done with our collective tongue, to a certain degree, in cheek. But that was it, and now we are each on our own. Even now we cannot help but be sarcastic, as Cobain has already been forgotten, as easily as Tonya Harding or River Phoenix or Lorena Bobbitt or whoever else fixated us for fifteen minutes. Despite the clichés spewed by lazy journalists, Kurt Cobain will never achieve the status of Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison or John Lennon. Why? Because we are not the baby boomers.

JOSHUA COZBY
Flagstaff, Arizona



Biographically challenged

To the editors:

Michael Kinsley's assessment of our April 13 *New York Times* ad profiling *Forbes* reader and Sun Microsystems founder Scott McNealy (TRB, "Log-Cabin Fever," May 9) is a bit peevisish. True, our 100-word ad omits details of McNealy's middle-class childhood, highlighting his "log cabin" (and quite genuine) beginnings as a shop foreman. Kinsley dourly insists this upbeat, "up-from-the-bottom" portrayal "helps disguise the advantage that still comes, even in America, from having an affluent background."

No one denies that McNealy's Harvard education and comfortable up-bringsings were advantages in his ascent. But if there is myth-making here, it stems from Kinsley's own preoccupation with the newer American myth of victimization. Does he *truly* believe our ad encourages affluent *Forbes* readers "to

force your kids to fake their résumés" to conceal their roots? We can see it now: self-help groups for the biographically challenged.

Perhaps our ad indulges in a touch of romanticism—or "myth-making," as Kinsley calls it. We always thought that's what makes effective advertising. If Kinsley wants the details of McNealy's career, all he has to do is read back issues of *Forbes*. The point of our ad was that, with or without his Harvard education, Scott McNealy has come very far—with a little help from *Forbes* along the way.

ELIZABETH AMES
Forbes Magazine
New York, New York

Pillow fight

To the editors:

In "A Winter's Tale" (April 18) Trevor Nelson laces into the media for their exaggerated accounting of storm-related casualties this winter, noting that when "... cardiac arrest claims a snow-shoveling victim, Mother Nature is probably less to blame than Father Time." Along the way, he cites the work of the epidemiologist Roger Glass, but overlooks the contribution of Fred T. Barry. Barry, a self-educated inventor, supersalesman and character in Kurt Vonnegut's *Deadeye Dick* (1982), has this to say about blizzards: "[They are] nothing but a big pillow fight. ... You'll hear on the news that so-and-so many people were killed by the blizzard, but they would have died anyway. Somebody dies of cancer he's had for eleven years, and the radio says the blizzard got him."

ARI BLECH
Oceanside, New York

Fat chants

To the editors:

In Jennifer Allen's article on Jerry Brown's call-in radio program ("Radio Daze," May 2) we learn that "the show begins with a reading of the Constitution, chanted by children." If there is still time during a two-hour program to play a song by Los Lobos and take calls, those kids must chant pretty fast.

JOHN CUSHING
Washington, D.C.

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Pants on fire

It is very hard to believe that Paula Jones is making the whole thing up. (I've tried, I've tried.) But it's not hard to believe she's making a lot of it up. And many of the most plausible scenarios of what really happened don't amount to sexual harassment—let alone “intentional infliction of emotional distress,” the charge she makes since the deadline for a harassment suit has long passed.

She might willingly have engaged in a sex act, with no quid pro quo, express or implied, and enjoyed it. That is more or less Trooper Danny Ferguson's version of the episode, as immortalized in *The American Spectator*. At the other extreme, she might have casually rejected a casual proposition (or merely a hint), and that was that. Both versions, or sundry variants of them, seem more likely than Jones's tale that the governor of Arkansas dropped his pants and said, “Kiss it,” and she fled in terror.

So Bill Clinton may face an exquisite dilemma, worthy of a psychological thriller: he cannot tell the true story, even if the true story would reveal him to be legally innocent. He can't say what really happened in that hotel room, because that would involve admitting that he did indeed invite a young woman to a hotel room, in the middle of the Governor's Quality Management Conference, with mischief in mind. Almost everyone thinks the hotel room meeting itself, at least, did occur. But Clinton must somehow negotiate this treacherous maze without explicitly conceding the point. Or so he and his advisers presumably believe.

Well, it's been done successfully before. Clarence Thomas, remember, did not attempt to defend the behavior alleged by Anita Hill, or even to give and defend his own modified version of those events. In fact, he ostentatiously agreed that what Hill accused him of was heinous in every particular and

should rightly deny him a seat on the Court, if true. But he denied point-blank, under oath, that what Hill described, or anything like it, had ever occurred. As it played out, the Hill-Thomas episode was not about sexual harassment. It was about perjury. And Thomas (in my view) got away with it.

For that reason, it is strange to hear some conservatives (and some chastened liberals—all men, oddly enough) say that the real lesson of the Paula Jones affair is that allegations about a public man's private life—be he Clarence Thomas or Bill Clinton—have no proper role in the public debate. (A couple of especially fair-minded conservative pundits have devoted entire columns recently to detailing the charges against Bill Clinton that they feel should not sully public discussion.) Or they say that standards for defining sexual harassment are out of control. And, in either case, they argue that Paula Jones is a liberal chicken come home to roost.

Yet Clarence Thomas and his supporters made no attempt to defend these propositions at the time of his troubles. They didn't say that what Clarence Thomas did to Anita Hill was nobody's business, or perfectly acceptable. They just said Anita Hill was lying.

Anyway, I don't see how anyone can seriously maintain that Paula Jones's story, if true in every particular, would have no relevance to an assessment of Bill Clinton as a public man. First, it would constitute classic, hardcore sexual harassment, which is illegal—even though the statute of limitations has passed. The label “sexual harassment” may be applied these days to situations that don't deserve it, but surely exposing yourself to a subordinate and saying “Kiss it” is not one of them.

Second, legality aside, it is gross and disgusting (and—let us not be too straight-faced about this—ludicrous) behavior that suggests a real character problem. Joe Klein, writing in *Newsweek*, describes this character problem as “promiscuity” (with public policy implications). I would describe it, perhaps even less charitably, as a cynical willingness to use and abuse other people (with even more obvious public policy implications). Third, if Paula Jones's story is true, Clinton has lied about it, which makes him less believable about other matters.

Unfortunately, some of these same considerations apply, to a lesser degree, to the more likely scenarios as well.

It's the lying that bothers me most. For years, since the controversies of the late 1970s about Edward Kennedy, I have been writing that politicians can't have it both ways about their so-called private life. If they regard their adulteries as of no public importance, then they shouldn't parade their wives and children along the campaign trail, either. But by broadcasting a certain picture of their private lives, they put the issue “in play,” and open themselves up to legitimate inquiry about whether that picture is accurate.

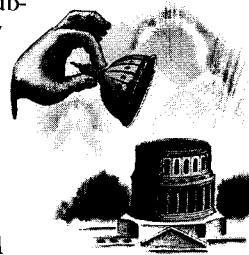
During the 1992 campaign, most notably in his famous “60 Minutes” interview, Bill Clinton came as close as any national politician has ever come to honesty in these matters. He said, in essence: I've sinned, but I've stopped. I don't pretend to have a perfect family life, so don't judge me a hypocrite for my imperfections. And he found a lot more public understanding than many predicted. The Paula Jones episode, dating from 1991, falls on the safe side of the “60 Minutes” divide. But now Clinton, through his lawyer, has denied point-blank that anything at all occurred.

Perhaps he'll get away with it, like Clarence Thomas. It's hard to blame him for trying. Even some Clinton opponents find the whole business so distressing that they sincerely wouldn't mind seeing it all waft away on a cloud of minor deceit. As a Clinton supporter, it's tempting to think that another small lie or two added to the pile accumulating in Washington every day matters very little compared with the prospect of a wrecked presidency and trashed political agenda.

The cynicism of Paula Jones and her handlers is infuriating. She suffered no “emotional distress” and they don't care a whit about sexual harassment of women. Their motivation is a poisonous stew of greed, political calculation and personal hatred of Bill Clinton. If one lie justified another in return, Clinton undoubtedly would have several coming to him, free of charge.

But lies by the likes of Paula Jones or Cliff Jackson or Trooper Danny Ferguson—or even Justice Clarence Thomas—don't justify more lies by the president of the United States. If he stonewalls and gets away with it, I'll have, I admit, no worse than mixed feelings. But if he would step forward and tell the true story, I'd feel a lot better.

MICHAEL KINSLEY



MAY 30, 1994

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

We have to face the possibility—and I say possibility—that, in fact, sometimes people we admire and respect and we want to do well may engage in behavior that is objectionable and maybe even against the law.

—Anita Hill, May 8

It is not the least—nor the least remarked—of the ironies of the Paula Jones affair that Anita Hill has now become the darling of do-what-it-takes conservatives. The woman memorably described by *The American Spectator* as “a little bit nutty and a little bit slutty” now adorns the front page of *The Washington Times* to corroborate the latest opportunistic venture of the radical right. No doubt soon, Hill will have another wad of lecture bookings from a more eclectic ideological base. It might include all those conservatives who have long inveighed against our overlitigious society and who now praise Jones for suing for infliction of “emotional distress.” Where is Dan Quayle when they need him? But then, we’re not sure what’s more objectionable: those conservatives who would abandon any principle to attack President Clinton, or those more world-weary types who stick to the principle that sexual harassment is no big deal and would be better left out of the political arena altogether.

In fact, the accusation of sexual harassment against the president of the United States is a big deal. It has nothing to do with the invasion of the president’s private life, which we have consistently lamented. It has everything to do with the president’s—or, rather, the former governor’s—*public* life, which is of great interest to anyone who cares about the integrity of the most powerful man in the country. The incident as Jones has described it is clearly harassment: a state employee sexually assaulted by her ultimate boss, the governor, at a meeting arranged by another state employee at a state conference (on total quality management!) during working hours. To their credit, feminist groups have belatedly begun to realize this, although with sadly less fervor than they defended the cause of Hill.

The women’s groups point out in their defense that they were never forewarned about the Jones case and have done nothing to discredit it in public. Moreover, Jones’s initial debut seems more ideologically orchestrated than Hill’s. Fair enough. But some of their arguments make less sense. The original reason for the rage over Anita Hill, they assert, was about the attempted suppression of her complaint, not the merit of the complaint itself. But the full extent of Jones’s complaint was also suppressed—by the white males of *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and CNN. And, unlike the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Leonard Downie et al. cannot argue that the accusation was anonymous or unsubstantiated. It was reported in these pages by Mickey Kaus (“Old News,” March 7) and thoroughly reported by the *Post*’s Michael Isikoff six weeks before the story was allowed to see the light of day. The women’s groups hardly hounded the press for keeping the story submerged. Maybe Patricia Ireland, the president of the National Organization for Women, has been reading Michael Crichton. She told us: “We’ve never taken the position that a charge made is a charge proven. . . . If we get into a kneejerk mode, it feeds the idea that this is not a serious and legitimate issue, but a political circus.” If only that had been her attitude with Hill.

In fact, the most important differences between the cases of Hill and Jones speak well for Jones. Unlike Hill, Jones’s alleged harassment is three years old—not ten. Jones’s accusation is also graver than Hill’s, implicating the president in a grotesque and invasive sexual advance. It’s also better substantiated, with clear, simultaneous confirmations of her distress by others. It came in response to an article in *The American Spectator*, which alleged that she had been a willing participant in the incident—at least as plausible an incentive for coming forward as Clarence Thomas’s nomination. And unlike Hill, Jones cannot rely on the succor of the nation’s



media elite. Jones comes from the world of Tonya Harding and Jennifer Flowers, a place where upper-middle-class liberals fear to tread. In the choice between Hill and Jones—between black professionalism and white trash—it is not hard to predict where *The New York Times* will come down.

Does this mean that Jones is telling the truth? Of course not. We note the discrepancies in her story, most damagingly her sister's recent claim that Jones's motive is money. We're also perturbed by the dubious character of her allies—Cliff Jackson, the Conservative Political Action Committee and the Christian Broadcasting Network. Then there is the way in which Jones's lawyers seem to have gingered up the account she first gave to *The Washington Post* to make it a firmer case of sexual harassment. But it's also true that Jones is prepared to put herself through the wringer of national and international attention, to forgo any legal damages that might fairly accrue to her and run up against a Washington legal machine that will do its best to wreck her reputation. She has already been vilified by her brother-in-law in *Newsweek*: "Promiscuity? Good gosh. Her mother is fixing to get the shock of her life when Paula's life comes out." And privately, Washington liberals are already pronouncing her, in the words of one, "a little *kurva*." The capacity of Jones to put herself through this process is not something that should be dismissed, and there's something unsavory about the way in which her sensibilities have been so cavalierly and widely discounted. What's more, sexual harassment is sexual harassment. The character or temperament or allure or class of the alleged victim is irrelevant. What is relevant is the nature of the crime.

Which brings us to the more interesting question. Do we believe Bill Clinton? His lawyer, Robert Bennett—the archetype of the Washington establishment's hired gun—immediately called the accusation "tabloid trash." The president's own first response was to say that he would not "dignify" the accusation with a comment. What does this say about his view of the seriousness of the charge of sexual harassment? Does Bill Clinton really not get it? The president's lawyer had negotiated twice with Jones's lawyers about a possible settlement. This has been widely cited as evidence to discredit Jones. But what does it say about the president's claim that the entire incident never occurred? It seems obvious to us that the tactic of blanket denial was a bluff to manage political damage, and not a reflection of the truth. Which, alas, hardly comes as a surprise from a president whose reflexive aversion to can-

dor has begun to amount to something close to a pathology.

The Jones case is not, after all, about sex. No sexual harassment case is only about sex. It is about power, and its abuse. We do not know whether Paula Jones's story is true; but we can say it is not incredible. The sad truth about the Clintons, as it has slowly emerged in the last year and a half, is that their attitude toward power is not pristine. Their motives in seeking political life are clearly mixed. Many are noble: both Clintons are obviously motivated by a genuine desire to do good, to improve the lot of their fellow citizens, and by any account, they have done a good deal to that end, both in Arkansas, and, in our view, in the country as a whole. But it is also true that some of their motives have been less elevated. It is hard to pore through the

vexing affair of the Whitewater investments or the cattle market speculation or the cronyism of many of Clinton's appointments or the details of the Jones complaint without seeing some common threads. The Clintons—and their many friends—are not immune to the perks of power. It is not inconceivable that these perks, however minor, might have included, on Rodham Clinton's part, money, and, on Clinton's part, sex. When the special prosecutor reports on Whitewater and the Jones case comes (we hope) to court, we shall see whether these indications seem far-fetched. But right now, they are not beyond the limits of belief. Certainly few officials in the administration have greeted them privately with shock or credible

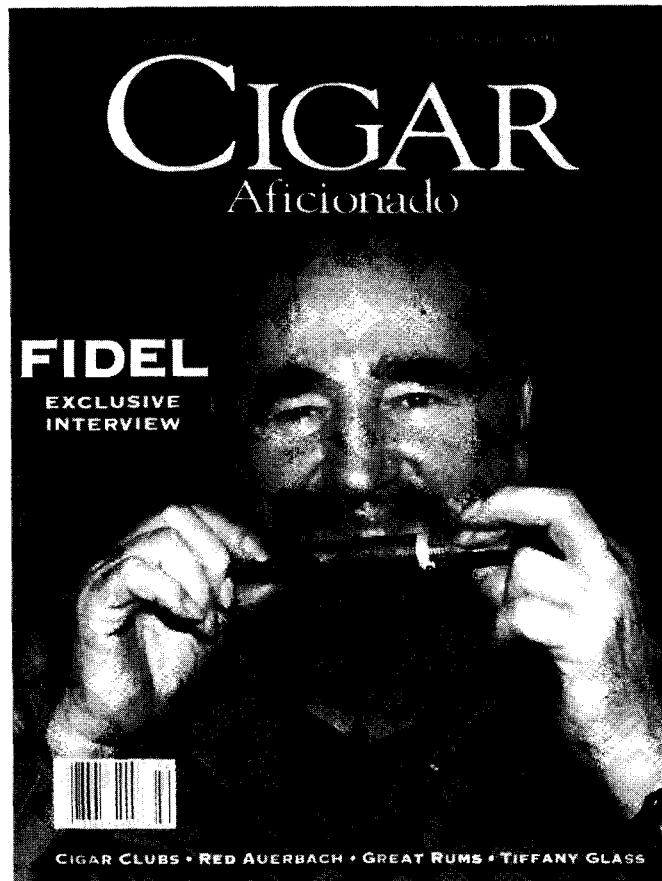
indignation. And they are legitimate areas of public scrutiny and concern.

Does this mean that Bill Clinton is a lousy president? Surely not. Even if the worst accusations are proved true, they do not approximate the corruption of a Richard Nixon, or the consistent abuse of power in sexual matters of a John Kennedy, or even the electoral misbehavior of a Lyndon Johnson. More important, none of them concerns the president's or his wife's behavior while in the White House; and none, in our judgment, outweighs the merits of his domestic program. But they do tell us something about the weaknesses of the president and his wife; and how power can corrupt if left unchallenged. The difference between now and decades past is that we no longer have to wait until the president is out of office to discover these things; nor wait until it is too late to keep them in check. So let the challenges continue; and let the American people sort them out. The republic (and this administration) will be better for it. •



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NOTEBOOK

HACKNEYED: The Jefferson Lecture, held under the auspices of the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH), has always been regarded as an occasion for the discussion of scholarly work at the highest academic level. Speakers in recent years have included Lionel Trilling, Robert Penn Warren, Saul Bellow, Barbara Tuchman, Emily Vermeule, Sidney Hook, John Hope Franklin, Leszek Kolakowski, Walker Percy and Bernard Knox. Sometimes standards have slipped, but rarely have they fallen off a cliff. What follows are extracts from this year's lecture, by the poet Gwendolyn Brooks, the first lecture commissioned by NEH Chairman Sheldon Hackney. The entire document can be gotten from the NEH. We think it speaks for itself:

[T]he loud critics of teenaged unmarried mothers and of one-parent homes are not considering the amount of pain they are lavishing on innocent children who happen to be members of single-parent homes. Are such keen and sly-tongued assessors aware of the permanent harm they are inflicting on these children—of the hot contribution they are making to loss of self-esteem?... Franklin Roosevelt experienced a single-parented home. Abraham Lincoln experienced a single-parented home. Angela Lansbury experienced a single-parented home.... Pointing to a contemporary welt, I say what may startle: I am acquainted with many lovable Jews! Insofar as I *know*, not one Jew has marauded or personally minimized me. That is *my* story. Others must speak out of their own experience. I deplore blanket detestation of any group. See *Fiddler on the Roof*, ye who believe that liking Jews is impossible.... Farrakhan. We don't have tea. I have met the Avidly Assaulted One once. About a quarter-century ago, a woman poet, then a Muslim, brought him to meet my husband and myself. He was impressively relaxed. He brought no guards, no guns. We were impressed by his warm eyes, his kind patience, flexible, dignity. He listened to our ideas. He listened to every word we said. He waited for us to finish our sentences. He never interrupted. (Today, interruption is an art.) He did not feel the need to pastor. At least, he did not pastor. He did not ask us to join anything.

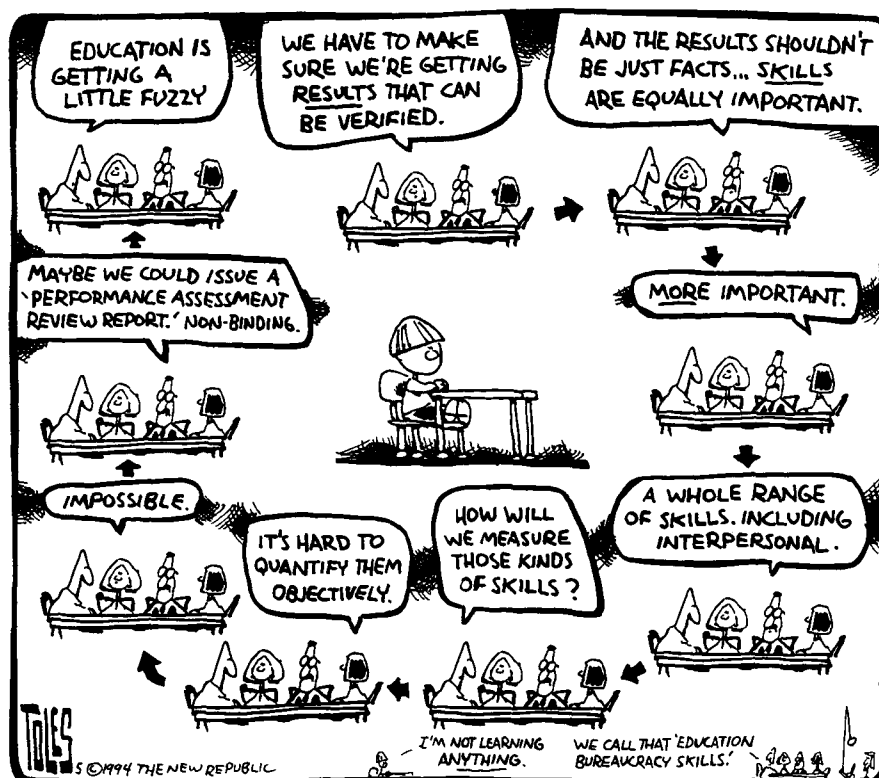
YOU MUST BE KIDDING:

How GE's tough love saved Kidder

—*Institutional Investor*, April 1994

GE May Try to Sell Kidder After Debacle

—*The Wall Street Journal*, April 19
(Thanks to Richard Aks, New York, New York.)



BUT LET ME FINNISH: "Historically, Finland and the United States have had friendly relations—especially in the cultural and economic realms where there have been decades of interaction and mutual influence. To give a few personal examples: I first experienced the genius of Finnish architecture as a student at Yale, walking through the residential colleges designed by Eero Saarinen. My family's best dinnerware is by Arabia, a world-renowned Finnish firm...."—Derek Shearer, ambassadorial nominee to Finland, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 2

ily's best dinnerware is by Arabia, a world-renowned Finnish firm...."—Derek Shearer, ambassadorial nominee to Finland, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 2

DAN QUAYLE COMEBACK WATCH:

Ex-Vice President Launches Bid to Replace Yeltsin

—*The Los Angeles Times*, May 10

DEATH, LIVE: "This is just the kind of break we needed for our ratings." —Chicago Fox News anchorman Walter Jacobson, thrilled to discover that his station had been granted permission to witness the execution of serial killer John Wayne Gacy. •

THE FLAPJACK FILE

YOU SURE ARE CUTE

By Douglas G. McGrath

Friday, May 6, 1994

The president has been under so much pressure that he's been drinking at night; it's something he invented called a Beer Daiquiri. It must do the trick because he's been oversleeping. So, at his request, Agent Searle and I went into personal quarters to wake him this morning. Flapjack was spread out over the bed, one leg thrown over Mrs. Rodham Flapjack's leg, the lower half of which, as a result, was blue. He had obviously fallen asleep before he was ready, because there was half a hot dog extending from his mouth. We pulled it out and he woke up.

He put on his jogging outfit: some Rhodes Scholar gym shorts and a T-shirt that said, "My wife and I invested \$74,000 dollars in Whitewater and all we got was this stupid T-shirt." He flipped on NPR to get the news. Corey Flintoff said, "Our top story: unemployment is down 38 percent, providing, according to Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, further evidence of a deep economic recession.... Former President Nixon's funeral had been taped in its entirety by the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, California, but per the library's policy, all the tapes have been destroyed...." Then, after a profile of a Botswanan cellist, they said, "In other news, the president of the United States has been accused of sexual harassment."

This made Flap so furious that he jogged to McDonald's in record time. "How can people say things like this about the president of the United States?" he asked with a wounded voice. "Is there no decorum left in this country at all?" The girl at the jog-through window gave Flap four big bags of food. He looked at the eight of us who had jogged with him and said, "Don't y'all want anything?" We said no. Flap turned back to the girl. He bit his lip and said, "You sure are cute. I've got a Quarter Pounder for you any time you want it. Little George, give her my room number!"

Back at the White House, it was more bad news. Mr. Christopher came in and said that Serbia had just invaded Italy and that Yeltsin had hired Rasputin's grandson as an adviser. Mr. Bentsen told Flap he wants to raise interest rates to 23 percent to make sure inflation doesn't go above 1.7 percent. Mr. Lake said he'd just learned that an American teenager in Malaysia sneezed without covering his mouth and was beheaded.

Flap was too depressed to go on and told everyone to leave. He turned on the T.V., hoping for "Hee-Haw." Unfortunately, he stopped at "Oprah," where five women accused him of having assaulted them at a Motel 6 in Shreveport in 1974. "This is so unfair!" Flap said, throwing a framed picture of him, Pamela Harriman and Jerry Lee Lewis at the T.V. "There were five of them and one of me. What's wrong with that? Why do they think it's called a Motel 6?"

Saturday, May 7

Flap and Mrs. Rodham Flap still very depressed, so Mr. Mack had the staff put on a show to cheer them up. Highlights: a *Wizard of Oz* reprise, as sung by Mr. Steph, Robert Reich and Ms. Shalala, with Mr. Reich particularly good as head of The Lullaby League. But the capper was Ms. Reno. She put a handful of unpopped popcorn in her mouth and held a lighter under her chin. A minute or so later the corn was popping right out of her mouth.

And there was some good news. Randall Robinson ended his hunger strike over Flap's Haitian policy. He was in the third week of not eating and apparently Calvin Klein had offered to give him a modeling contract.

Sunday, May 8

Poor old Flap! He really wants to give the country a better future but he can't work on it because he spends all his present fixing things from his past. As a result, Mr. Ickes has turned the War Room into the Bimbo Neutralization Center. This morning he put up a map to keep track of the eruptions. In a discouraging development, just before lunch, they had to order another box of pins.

Flap spent the morning flipping frantically among the morning talk shows. On "Brinkley," he saw former vice shrub Dan Quayle, who said, "What is interesting in this whole event, Jim, is that I was flying through the air the other day in a plane on my way to Washington, which is one of the best American cities of this century in the District of Columbia. I was about 33,000 miles up, looking down toward the ground at people inside their homes, and I was sort of thinking, 'What this country needs to lead it is strong leadership.' But I asked myself a follow-up: 'Where do we get it? From a ship? No, from a leader.' And as any of those guys in the National Guard will tell you, I am sort of a leader. I have probably not made up my mind about running in 1996. It is only 1994, and I want to take a few years to think about it. But if I do run, I will win the nomination and I will be Bill Clinton's competition for the president of the United States, which is one of the best jobs you can get in the White House."

For the first time in days, Flap looked relaxed. "Beer Daiquiris all around!" he said and clapped me on the back.

DOUGLAS G. McGRATH is a New York writer.

SHELL GAME

By William Cash

There is something almost grimly satisfying about the spectacle of staggering uselessness—a point at which the level of incompetence becomes an achievement. Take the gruesome fiasco on Isabela island, the largest of Ecuador's Galapagos archipelago, where until recently a fire threatened to destroy the giant tortoises that inspired Charles Darwin's Victorian bombshell, *On the Origin of Species*.

The fire started in early April and destroyed an estimated nineteen square miles. Certainly, Ecuador's efforts to save one of the world's most precious ecosystems were thwarted by Isabela's location 600 miles from the mainland. But the Ecuadorans, as I learned on a recent visit, thwarted themselves, too.

The emergency fire fighting team of Ecuadorean Civil Defense, led by the chain-smoking Colonel Cesar Baus, along with the state geological engineer, was on my plane to the Galapagos from the fetid port of Guayaquil. His dozen or so recruits, clad in yellow Paddington-bear macintoshes, were slouched a few rows behind me like a bad local soccer team that had fluked its way to a first cup draw. After the drinks cart had rattled past twice, there was not much left of the Johnnie Walker Red Label. It was 10:30 a.m. When we arrived at the shedlike airport on Baltra Island, Baus and his troops swaggered off the plane expecting to be airlifted to Isabela. No such luck. Much later, after a ferry trip to Santa Cruz island, I bumped into the colonel lounging in the sunshine around the tiny port of Puerto Ayora—trying to scrounge a lift off any boat heading for Isabela.

For the deranged price of \$500, a Reuters photographer and I managed to hire a boat—a small plastic soap-dish with an outboard motor—to get us to Isabela. When the colonel saw us, he marched over and announced he would commandeer the vessel unless we gave his boys a ride.

"Why don't you get your own?" I asked, pointing to the harbor. "This is rather small."

"We have no money."

"Can't you borrow some?"

"I am confiscating this boat."

"O.K., O.K.," I said. "Get in."

By 5 p.m., when our soap-dish chugged out of the harbor, it was weighed down like a Hong Kong barge. The trip should have taken two hours. Around 7:30 p.m., plunged in Stygian darkness, our skipper cut the engines and sheepishly announced we were utterly lost.

For the next three hours we drifted about in the shark-infested Pacific, with the colonel and crew trying to read a plastic pocket-compass by the light of the moon; a fatuous exercise, since they did not know the island's coordinates. Around midnight we were picked up by the radar of a U.S. destroyer, and guided through the treacherous currents to Isabela.

The trip to the military camp near the fire entails a three-hour march across rock so sharp it will cut up Timberland soles, followed by a two-hour ride on a manky horse, which you are expected to ride using a piece of green nylon parcel string for reins and a flattened cardboard box as a saddle. Not for us, however. The next morning the Civil Defense team's luck had (supposedly) changed. A 4WD military truck would pick us up at 5 a.m. Only, it never appeared. Three hours later we were told a jeep was on its way. It never came—no gas. When the Reuters photographer waved a stack of dollars at a local official, saying she would buy them however much bloody gas they wanted, she was told: "The island has no gas." You get the point.

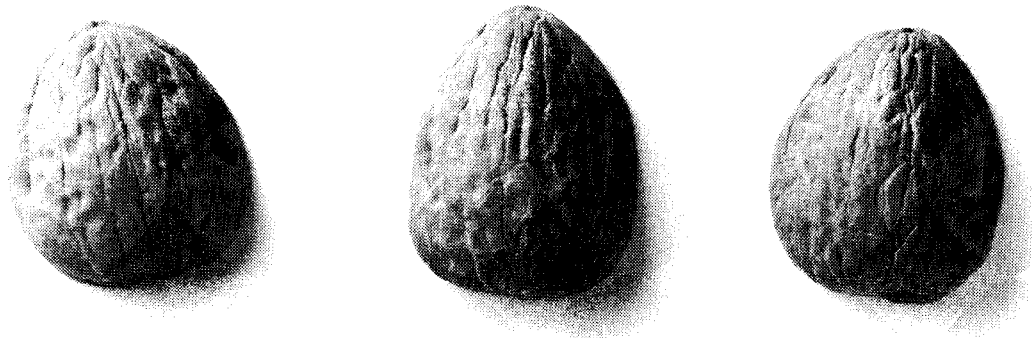
Forget the \$12 tortoise T-shirts on sale in the tourist bazaars on Santa Cruz. The tragedy of the Galapagos is that most islanders don't care much about their prehistoric tortoises. When an American businessman wanted to build a resort, the locals were in favor. The government blocked the idea. And although hunting tortoises is illegal, they are still killed. Only last month, fifteen dead tortoises were discovered one morning on a beach—intact, except for their kidneys. Islanders believe that if you rub a tortoise kidney on a woman's pregnant belly, the baby will be healthy.

Of course, the West has not been the giant tortoise's best friend, either. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the tortoise population was in danger of extinction after whalers—mostly American—loaded up ship after ship with as many as 600 tortoises. When whalers moved to the Antarctic, teams of scientists—again, mainly American—jumped in to "collect" giant tortoises. As head of the California Academy of Sciences expedition of 1905, American naturalist Rollo Beck "killed and removed" 266 tortoises. In 1928 the New York Zoological Society rounded up another 180.

Though the fire is now under control (and some tortoises have been moved to safety), the debate over its origin rages. Officials insist the blaze was started by a farmer burning garbage. It may, however, have begun on its own: part of Darwin's theory of the island's natural cycle. There have also been darker suggestions that the fire was started by islanders fed up with the government's bowing to environmental pressure to ban the fishing of shark, lobster and sea cucumber. If so, Ecuador's president, Sixto Duran-Ballen, shouldn't worry too much. Since Isabela only picks up Peruvian T.V., maybe he'll be mistaken for Alberto Fujimori.

WILLIAM CASH is American correspondent-at-large for the London *Daily Mail*.

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South Africa's quirky transformation.

SURPRISED BY JOY

By Richard Stengel

A conspiracy of happiness has overtaken this long-depressed land. The murder rate in Johannesburg—one of the homicide capitals of the world—has plummeted. Black taxi drivers invite white passengers to sit in the front seat so that they can chat. Afrikaner matrons phone Radio 702, the country's most popular call-in program, to exclaim how courteous the black passengers were when they rode an African bus for the first time. Nelson Mandela, never a promiscuous hugger, is embracing everyone in sight: from Zulu Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to Constandt Viljoen, the leader of the right-wing Freedom Front.

There has been a kind of national collusion of good feeling about an election process that was something less than competent. Even the white right has been silenced by the optimism. Its only grumblings have been over plans by the African National Congress (ANC) to change English place names to African ones. Jan Smuts Airport, named after South Africa's World War II prime minister, will become Chris Hani International, they fear. Terror Lekota, the new ANC premier of the Free State, announced that he intends to change the name of Bloemfontein to Mangaung, which loosely translated means "place of the cheetah." Afrikaners complain that there are no cheetahs left in Bloemfontein. They worry, too, that their sleepy town just might become popular by dint of its exotic new name.

Second Deputy President F.W. de Klerk seems to have grown into his diminished role. He is smiling much more these days, and in a press conference at Tuynhuis, South Africa's White House, which he is ceding to his successor, he played the role of servile No. 2. "May I speak now?" he said abjectly at one point to a regal-looking Mandela. The Nationalist Party leader seems positively relieved to hand over the burdens of office to the new president. Aides say he is even cutting down on his three-pack-per-day cigarette habit.

His wife, Marike, however, has appeared a bit churlish about the new South Africa. She publicly admitted that she hoped Mandela would not force them to move out of their Pretoria state house because she is far too attached to it to leave. On the first day of the National Assembly she conspicuously did not applaud when Mandela was elected president by acclamation.

Even she seems to be coming around, though. During the inaugural ceremony at the Union Buildings in

Pretoria Mrs. de Klerk mouthed the words to "Nkosi Sikilele iAfrika" (God Bless Africa), the new co-national anthem and a hymn that has been a moving symbol of the liberation struggle for decades. On the campaign trail de Klerk's rallies would often end with a rendition of "Nkosi Sikilele"; it was part of the Nationalist Party's strategy to attract black votes. De Klerk would whip out an index card to sing along with the music. But at the inauguration, he and Marike sang the first two verses from memory.

The ANC may be in power, but it cannot yet get the planes to run on time. South African Airways scheduled a special charter for all the new ANC members of Parliament to travel from Johannesburg to Cape Town for the opening of the National Assembly and the election of President Mandela. The first flight left Johannesburg three hours late, and the return flight from Cape Town was canceled. An irate ANC M.P. complained, "The white business elites like South African Airways are just trying to show us they still have the power, but they soon will be singing another tune."

Some whites have been heard to mutter about Mandela's new presidential salary. While de Klerk earned a tax-exempt salary of roughly \$78,000 per year, Mandela will receive a total package of \$200,000, but he will pay taxes on it of approximately 40 percent. There would have been fewer complaints had Mandela, in his final campaign debate with de Klerk, not asserted that he would be "frugal" and cut governmental salaries. By and large, though, the public does not begrudge him a little comfort. I overheard an Afrikaans-speaking policeman say about Mandela's salary, "Ag, man, he didn't even get a bloody pension for those twenty-seven years in jail."

There were relatively few signs of traditional African culture during the course of the official inauguration. The exception was the presence of an itinerant Tembu *imbongi*, or praise-singer, Sthembile Mlangeni, who has dogged Mandela for the last few days. In traditional Xhosa culture, chiefs are preceded by praise-singers who ritualistically laud them before they speak. Security during the inauguration period has been tight, but when you are wearing only a leopard-skin robe and carrying a knobkerrie, a traditional African weapon made of wood, security guards do not ask you for identification. Although he was not scheduled to speak at any official gathering, the resolute Mlangeni chanted guttural praises to Mandela on the floor of the new National Assembly and at the main podium during the inauguration. Mandela's aides seemed vaguely embarrassed by a performance that seemed to most whites to be a relic of darkest Africa. But Mlangeni is up-to-date. While he does not seem to have a pocket anywhere on his outfit, he produced business cards for any journalist who cared to take one. Such is the new South Africa.

RICHARD STENGEL is editing Nelson Mandela's memoirs.

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Cortines Sets Standards

Since Chancellor Ramon Cortines began running the New York City school system less than a year ago, he has demonstrated a real concern with raising academic standards and improving the quality of education in the city's schools. A few weeks ago, he unveiled his latest initiative, which would tighten graduation requirements by increasing the number of mathematics and science courses from 2 to 3 units. More important, it would require that kids who are entering freshmen in 1994 take and pass academic courses in math and science in order to graduate.

Currently, students may satisfy the math and science requirements by taking either academic courses or watered-down courses that are nothing more than glorified arithmetic and general science. Many follow the path of least resistance: According to the *New York Times* (May 3, 1994), 84 percent of juniors and seniors in 1992-93 chose low-level math courses and 76 percent low-level science courses. The pattern of choosing math and science courses that don't ask much of kids—or give them much, either—is especially prevalent among African-American and Hispanic students.

There are people who believe that minority students are helped by being allowed to elect dumbed-down courses—that way, they say, the kids are less likely to flunk or get discouraged. But Cortines believes that this choice system is failing youngsters rather than helping them. Kids who take low-level courses are not adequately prepared for college, and the limited skills they have attained limit them in the job market, as well. His answer is to get rid of the Mickey Mouse courses altogether and make the most rigorous offerings in math and science the system standard.

The school system has already begun to make the extensive changes necessary to carry out this reform: curriculum revision; staff development programs for teachers; sessions for parents and students. And Cortines is talking about strengthening the math and science curriculums in middle school so students will be better prepared when they enter high school. However, I haven't heard anything about how students will be tested on what they have learned. This is important because it will be much easier to change the *name* of



His answer is to get rid of Mickey Mouse courses altogether and make the most rigorous offerings in math and science the system standard.

a course so it fits in with the new curriculum than to change the reality. The only way to make sure that kids who are taking "Geometry" or "Physics I" are actually learning the material they should learn will be through some kind of external testing like a Regents or Advanced Placement exam. Otherwise, New York City could end up with a reform that sounds good but accomplishes nothing.

So far, the response to Chancellor Cortines' initiative has been very supportive. But the real test will come a year or so down the road when a bunch of kids fail the tough courses and are faced with the possibility of not getting their diplomas. What can we expect then?

Will we hear from the federal Office of Civil Rights that the math and science courses are biased, and will New York City be told to reinstate the Mickey Mouse courses or risk losing all federal funding? Will there be legal challenges asserting every student's right to get a diploma? Or will the city be told that it must put off implementing its curriculum changes in science until every school is equipped with a fine science lab and every science and math teacher has done graduate work in his or her field?

The chancellor can forestall this kind of problem. The successful school systems of other industrialized nations do not require exactly the same courses of all their students.

Math or science courses vary in difficulty depending on the program students are following. This is not the same as our practice of giving some youngsters the real thing and the rest garbage. It acknowledges the reality that some kids are better able than others to work at the highest level in math or science, but all can be held to a standard that is demanding and worthwhile; the ceiling is high, but so is the floor.

This approach is called *tracking*, and it's politically incorrect right now. But if the chancellor were to ignore that fact and institute worthwhile courses at varying levels of difficulty, he would not have to worry about the political heat that will be generated when large numbers of kids fail to meet his single tough standard. Instead, he'd be able to look forward to a big round of applause when large numbers of kids, all of whom had gained something worthwhile from courses in math and science, came through with flying colors.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

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VIVA HAITI

By Fred Barnes

President Clinton is glib and confident in describing the problem in Haiti. "Two-thirds of the people voted for [Jean-Bertrand] Aristide," he told CNN on May 3. "He is kicked out, the military leaders promise to leave, they don't, but we want to be good neighbors. We don't want to be the big bully going around using our power in a destructive way. How do you solve that?" Ah, there's the rub. Deciding on a strong solution, then sticking with it—that doesn't sound like Clinton's foreign policy, does it?

By my count, Clinton has embarked on his fifth policy on Haiti. And that's just in the sixteen months since he's been president. I'm not counting his call in the 1992 campaign to reverse George Bush's policy of turning back Haitian boat people headed here. As president, Clinton's first policy was the same as Bush's: returning boat people and paying lip service to Aristide as Haitian president. Then came the July 1993 Governor's Island accord, which set a deadline for Aristide's return and promised amnesty for the military leaders who had overthrown him in 1991. That was policy No. 2. When it fell apart, after an American effort to put military trainers ashore in Haiti was aborted, policy No. 3 was adopted. It pressured Aristide and Haitian business and military leaders to reconcile. Within months, policy No. 4 pressed Aristide to form a coalition government while promising to put him back in power. But Aristide and his allies objected. So policy No. 5 evolved: stronger economic sanctions, new procedures for dealing with refugees, no pressure on Aristide to compromise.

Why so many zigzags? Two reasons. One is that Clinton responds to even small amounts of pressure. The hunger strike by TransAfrica's Randall Robinson, for example, paralyzed the White House, and was primarily responsible for the new refugee policy. The other is Clinton's habit of finessing every problem by putting off the day of reckoning. One White House official likens this to kicking a can while walking down the street, then kicking it out front again. The latest delay was for new sanctions to take effect and for a new envoy to Haiti, congressman Bill Gray, to take his post. What's the timetable for judging if harsher sanctions have worked? "I think I have to let Mr. Gray do a little work before I can answer that question," the president said on May 8.

Clinton's campaign pledge led to his first policy. Hun-

dreds of Haitians had poured into boats and headed for the United States in anticipation of his inauguration. Clinton feared many would drown and decided they had to be sent back to Haiti. Adopting Bush's policy was an embarrassment for Clinton and for Sandy Berger, the deputy national security adviser who crafted Clinton's foreign policy positions during the campaign. Berger is now the chief architect of Haiti policy. He and Clinton were eager to undo their embarrassment over the issue.

The way out was the Governor's Island accord. Returning Aristide to power would supposedly reduce the flood of immigrants. But Haitian military leaders reneged. Then, as part of a U.N. mission, Clinton dispatched the *USS Harlan County* to Haiti with 270 military trainers aboard. The aim was to modernize the Haitian military and police, thus helping to clear the way for democracy. This mission sparked a bitter fight between the White House and then-Defense Secretary Les Aspin, who insisted on a "benign environment" if the unarmed troops were to go ashore. It didn't exist. Over Aspin's objection, the ship sailed to Haiti, only to find its berth occupied and about 100 armed thugs running amok near the dock. At this tiny show of opposition, the ship was called back.

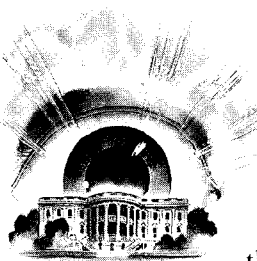
"I've never seen any administration backslip like this one," says Lawrence Pezzullo, Clinton's envoy to Haiti until late April. "If you don't have the capacity to defend your position, then anybody can come in and push you around." Pezzullo wanted the ship to stay. General

Raoul Cedras, the Haitian military commander, was amazed that the ship left, Pezzullo says. He quotes Cedras as saying: "I'm surprised you didn't persist." Pezzullo says Aristide was miffed and asked, "What are you guys doing?" That was hard to answer.

Soon after, Pezzullo emerged as the major player, trying to forge a coalition government that Aristide would agree to. This wasn't easy.

Pezzullo says Aristide is no Nelson Mandela, seeking reconciliation. "The best you can say for him is 70 percent of the people voted for him in an election," says an aide to Secretary of State Warren Christopher. When Aristide met with Clinton in March 1993, Clinton announced his commitment to a negotiated settlement. Aristide went along unenthusiastically. In December Clinton congratulated Aristide and his prime minister, Robert Malval, for agreeing to "bring more people into your circle of supporters." Aristide stood by stone-faced. A week later he repudiated the agreement with Malval.

The blowup was bound to produce a new policy, and it did. In February, after Malval had quit, Pezzullo and Berger went to Aristide with a fresh plan. If he named a new prime minister of a consensus government and set a date to return to Haiti, the United States would "honor" it and press Cedras to retire on the same date. Or at least the United States would "delegitimize" Cedras's government, according to Pezzullo. Vice President Al Gore took this plan to Aristide a few weeks later, but by then Aristide had lost interest in compromise. He'd won the support of the Congressional Black Caucus, other black leaders and some liberals in Congress. They lobbied the



White House aggressively, claiming sanctions weren't working, Aristide was being pressured unconscionably and the policy of returning refugees was racist.

The lobbying worked marvelously. In April national security adviser Anthony Lake and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott offered up a scheme that Aristide had wanted all along. Stronger sanctions would be imposed with no more pressure on him to broaden his regime. The White House also had to cope with Robinson's hunger strike. Lake called him almost daily. Berger went to visit him. Clinton told Clarence Page of *The Chicago Tribune* that he respected what Robinson was doing. "We need to change our policy."

It changed. Now the problem is making the new policy work. It gives Cedras and his allies until May 21 to yield power or face tougher sanctions. Clinton says he hasn't ruled out military intervention, and there are contingency plans to send heavily armed U.S. troops. But Clinton also says, "We are doing our best to avoid dealing with the military option." So who knows? My guess is, troops or not, we'll get a new policy. •

We still can't trust Arafat.

THE WAR POLICY

By Martin Peretz

The psychodrama of Palestinian nationalism continues. The most recent act was staged in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho last week, but it was an anti-climax. Actually, nothing happened, or not very much. It is still not quite clear how the locals will experience the autonomy regime. Months ago, when this first phase in the handing over of land was originally scheduled to take place, the PLO treated Israel's reluctance to let it happen without having all the reciprocal specifics in place as just another instance of colonial treachery. This time the Rabin government was a bit more lax (there will be Palestinian checkpoints on the borders, for example). Of course, the PLO took advantage of what its factotums took as a weakening of Jerusalem's resolve and made more and more symbolic demands, the adornments of sovereignty clearly being more enticing than concrete tasks for which they can be held accountable. Can Yasir Arafat really be bothered by whether sewage in Gaza City actually works? So, one of the demands to which much meaning was attached was that the new Palestinian police force be allowed to enter in full military formation the turf in which it was charged with keeping order. Israel said no. In the end, as it happens, Palestinian police weren't anywhere to be found on the day they were expected. Then, two rag-tag bands

numbering in the low hundreds assembled on the Jordanian and Egyptian frontiers and waited to ramble in, explaining that there weren't more of them because the foreign aid that was supposed to pay their salaries had not yet arrived. As of this writing they have not yet crossed the borders. Other civilian authorities will also be a bit tardy. Since Arafat wants chaos in the "liberated" lands least of all, his men quietly asked the Israelis to stay and run the show for a few more weeks even though the PLO flag flutters from every lamppost. Asking them to stay, however, did not keep the PLO from denouncing them for staying. In Gaza, some of those who stayed were stoned.

The cause of the wider delay seems to be Arafat's inability to decide who will sit in which seats of the mighty. Still, on everybody's testimony, including that of Arafat's longtime man in New York, Professor Edward Said, Arafat's choice is only a choice among his own cronies. These folk have been living a high-style rhetorical revolution for decades, and few of them will be able to adapt to the quotidian necessities of life in Jericho. What's more, they are also accustomed to the habits of command. Surely some Palestinians are not eager for such rulers. But such rulers they will have. Maybe Hamas will, here and there, extract some appointments on the ground for its loyalists, although no one counts this a plus for Arab pluralism. More prepared, in a rough way, for the job facing them are the 9,000 armed Palestinian police to which Israel has agreed for this phase of the autonomy. And, foreign aid or not, soon enough all of them will be on duty. Some of them were trained in Yemen, which means they were trained to suppress dissidents and oppositionists. Most of the new police have already served as pitiless enforcers of Palestinian submission to the will of Fatah, and it is this pitilessness in exile that commends them to the peace processors for a similar task at home. This is not a constabulary. This militia will also be equipped with armored carriers, helicopters, light weapons, machine guns and patrol boats. Who will guarantee that some of them will not carry shoulder missiles, and what happens if they do? Who, that is, will guard the guardians?

Chairman Arafat (or, as he prefers to call himself, President Arafat) is very ambivalent about the agreement he signed in Washington on September 13, 1993. In Cairo last week for the second handshake and the second signing, he refused for some long minutes to put his name to the map of Jericho to which his representatives had agreed in the drawn-out negotiations these many months. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was there, and—very much in character—looked unperturbed. The Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, was in Cairo, too, plum pleased to be there. Since Russia can't assure peace within its own borders, it is desperate still to be seen as a player, however far-fetched, in making peace within anyone else's. Finally, but not at all sheepishly, Arafat signed, doubtless thinking to himself that he had won a point with his ultras by making Yitzhak Rabin squirm for half an hour.

Making Rabin squirm actually seems to be all there is now of a Palestinian strategy. Nonetheless, for the moment, he seems to be unconditionally committed to

letting the erratic dynamics of the agreement run their course. But he does not love this agreement unconditionally (he, unlike Shimon Peres, is not its parent), and almost everyone who knows this no-nonsense former general can envision some last straw that could turn him against it. If he turns, many others will turn with him, even many on the dovish left. Were this particular flank in Israeli politics to turn, it would do so with the bitterness of betrayed lovers. Indeed, many enthusiasts of the September 13 happening are already wondering why they were so cheery. The Palestinians would do well to weigh their provocations carefully; they could easily provoke too much. If they demonstrated at some especially urgent moment—something comparable, say, to the recent Arab atrocities in Afula and Ashdod—they might even provoke inadvertently the thought that, as Ze'ev Chafets put it in *The Jerusalem Report*, there isn't "an authoritative, reasonable, decent Palestinian leadership to make peace with" after all.

I doubt there is such a leadership, although I am eager to be proved wrong. I also doubt that economic aid can convert a febrile politics into a sensible politics. This conflict is not about bread or even about water or water resources; it is about land. A reasonable leadership would understand that it cannot win at the conference table all that it lost in a war, and in a war, at that, that the victor did not start. But no one is ready to assure that the PLO will forgo, or be able to forgo, the temptations of old maps. So, after Israel has made its last concession and after Arafat or his successors have signed off on this concession as, indeed, Israel's last, the PLO will yet be aggrieved, and the grievance will be put into the streets. The Arab claim to Jerusalem and to Safed and to dozens of other places, one after another, will not be stilled. If I am right about this, there will be ongoing terrorism and insurrection which, of course, will never end, we'll be told, without one more Israeli concession . . . and then another. •

It's time to get addicts off welfare.

HOOKE

By Sally Satel

For a group of homeless alcoholic men in Denver, the first day of every month is like Christmas. That's when they receive their federal disability checks and begin serious drinking. Two thousand miles away, in Manhattan, the first of the month has a similar effect on the residents of a municipal hotel for people with AIDS. They cash their disability checks, buy cocaine and turn the hotel into a crackhouse.

Behind these and other horror stories is a classically

misguided federal handout: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a twenty-two-year-old welfare program that is part of the Social Security Administration. SSI was created to provide a guaranteed minimum level of income to the blind, the elderly and the disabled poor. Substance abusers are eligible for payment because of a 1969 Department of Health, Education and Welfare ruling that stated that people whose primary disability was drug abuse or alcoholism could receive public assistance.

It all sounded logical enough, but it turned out to be bad public policy, for the growth of drug addiction and alcoholism disability payments (DA&A) has been alarming. Today, there are nearly 80,000 people receiving DA&A checks, a 300 percent increase just since December 1989. Months after enrollment, many recipients collect a lump sum of thousands of dollars—money they should have been paid while their claims were being processed—followed by an average monthly check of \$350. In 1993, according to an investigation by Senator William Cohen of Maine, all this cost taxpayers \$320 million. More troubling than the money, however, is the misuse of funds by DA&A beneficiaries: an alcoholic in Denver had his checks direct-deposited at a bar; another in Van Nuys, California, put his lump sum payment toward the purchase of two cars and a van; an amphetamine addict in San Francisco bought high-quality speed with his payments only to dilute it and sell it for profit.

Recently, the Social Security Administration has been trying to enforce SSI's original mandates. The program stipulates that a DA&A recipient must participate in substance abuse treatment and designate a responsible payee to whom the monthly checks are sent. Yet it has always been hard for recipients to find clean and sober people to serve as payees; they rarely know any who are willing. And as Senator Cohen's report documented, few controls exist to ensure that recipients comply with the treatment requirement. As of August 1993 only eighteen states had monitoring agencies overseeing compliance, meaning only 9 percent of DA&A recipients were known to be receiving treatment. This January an additional twenty-nine states established monitoring agencies. Still, there are no requirements that recipients undergo a periodic review to update their disability status.

In addition to these administrative problems, there are stark clinical realities that SSI has not faced. First, a severely addicted person cannot, by definition, control his life. His waking hours are spent obtaining drugs or alcohol, experiencing their effects and avoiding withdrawal. His judgment is so impaired that he pursues these activities compulsively; he has no "choice" but to exhaust financial resources to satisfy his cravings. A program that gives an addict money necessarily makes things worse.

Second, offering cash assistance for an unlimited period of time—as SSI does—violates the most basic rules of addiction treatment. It creates a perverse incentive whereby the system penalizes those who attain

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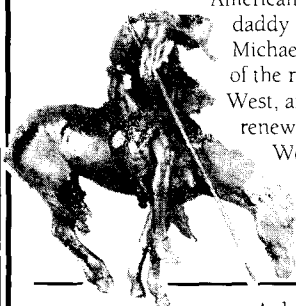
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abstinence (by cutting off their checks) and rewards those who continue with their destructive behavior. Third, SSI is a virtual setup for abuse. Cohen's investigation found evidence of a "disability industry": attorneys, clinics and doctors earning fees by diagnosing substance abusers in creative ways to improve their chances of qualifying for SSI.

To counteract these problems, Congress is attempting to fix SSI. On March 2 the Senate unanimously passed the Social Security Disability and Rehabilitation Reform Act. It mandates that retroactive payments to addicts be held in trust and that monthly benefits be managed by institutional payees such as licensed state treatment facilities. Addicts must also comply with treatment requirements and must have their disability status reviewed regularly. Most controversial is the adoption of a cumulative three-year limit on addiction benefits. On April 28 the House Ways & Means Committee passed a version of the Senate measure that included the time limit and most other key aspects. The full House will soon vote on this version, which is expected to pass.

By adding new controls and tightening old ones, the reforms correctly emphasize that addiction is not like other diseases and, in the context of SSI, is not like other disabilities. The Veterans Administration, which manages one of the largest disability programs in the country, recognizes this. Besieged for years by lawsuits and challenges to provide payments to veterans, the V.A. has wisely avoided the addiction-as-disease-as-disability trap; rather than write checks, it simply offers free treatment to low-income drug-abusing and alcoholic veterans.

Of course, we wouldn't need as large a Social Security welfare program if the public treatment system were bigger and if it specifically targeted hard-core addicts and alcoholics. Residential programs, for instance, are often essential to the early phases of treatment of the severely addicted, yet there are fewer than 12,000 long-term residential beds in the United States. These programs provide a drug-free, protected living environment that offers access to medical care and intense treatment exposure. In residential programs abstinence solidifies and patients can begin to restructure their private lives, enter job-training programs, etc. This year the administration proposed \$300 million to expand treatment. That's a good start, but it's not nearly enough.

Why not simply abolish the DA&A disability program? After all, addicts don't need money—they need treatment. If DA&A's \$320 million were put into the federal substance abuse treatment system, it would more than double the amount the administration is recommending. The additional money could finance programs that offer a continuum of active treatment, from residential to outpatient, and emphasize entry into the work force. Part of the money could also be spent creating alternative arrangements for chronic alcoholics or addicts whose extensive abuse makes recovery unlikely but whose impairment prevents them from responsibly managing government disability funds.

Think about it: once a disability check is in the mail, should the Social Security Administration spend its time monitoring treatment and gauging progress? Absolutely not. Let treatment experts do it. That's a much more sensible way to help addicts.

SALLY SATEL, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine, is a 1993-94 Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow.

AFTER YOU'VE GONE

THREE WISE MEN

By John B. Judis

While America grieved over Richard Nixon, I mourned the passing of Russell Kirk, Karl Hess and Christopher Lasch. Kirk, who died on April 29, was the intellectual founder of modern American conservatism; Hess, who passed away on April 20, was a libertarian who first gained renown as Barry Goldwater's speechwriter in 1964; and Lasch, who died on February 14, was a left-wing historian known for his pessimistic, neo-Freudian analyses of modern culture. Despite these differences in their political allegiances, they shared an underlying faith in an older American vision of work, family and nature that consistently defied political and academic fashion.

I met Kirk in 1982 when I was writing a biography of William F. Buckley Jr. Some of Buckley's friends and colleagues had rebuffed my requests for interviews—I was an unknown writer for a small, left-wing newsweekly—but Kirk invited me to visit him in Mecosta, the small northern Michigan town where he had grown up and to which he returned after teaching briefly at Michigan State College. Through clouds of pipe smoke, Kirk, a small, prim man with a gold pocket watch protruding from his vest pocket, answered my questions about Buckley and the conservative movement. Later, he asked me to stay for dinner with his family, and afterward, insisted that I sleep over and resume our conversation in the morning. He was one of the most cordial people I've ever met.

Kirk, who was born in 1919, came to prominence with his first book, *The Conservative Mind*, which was published in 1953. Written at a time when Richard Hofstadter and Louis Hartz were contending that America was the ultimate liberal nation, Kirk's book went against the grain, arguing that the United States had a strong, conservative intellectual tradition. He went on to write many other books, including several gothic mysteries, and to edit a conservative journal, *Modern Age*.

Though conservatives claimed him as their own, Kirk

hewed to his own path. In 1954 Buckley wanted him to be an editor of *National Review*, but he preferred to keep an arm's length from the publication, writing a regular column but avoiding editorial responsibilities. He fretted about Buckley's affinity for Senator Joseph McCarthy and found much in the first issues "sophomoric." He was wary of zealotry. Remarking on John Birch Society founder Robert Welch's charge that Dwight Eisenhower was "a Red," Kirk quipped, "Eisenhower's not a Communist, but a golfer." And he despised libertarians, calling them "chirping sectaries of the right." He once told historian George Nash that he felt closer to socialist Norman Thomas than to anarcho-capitalist Murray Rothbard. Like his hero Edmund Burke, Kirk had no quarrel with the power of the state, as long as it was exercised for worthy ends.

Kirk knew that his views ran counter to popular perceptions of what a conservative should be. He told me of being invited in the '70s to debate socialist Michael Harrington at the University of North Carolina. He hadn't bothered to find out the topic until he was just about to leave home. "They informed me that the subject was the environment. Harrington was to be for it, and I was to be against it," Kirk said with a smile. Kirk told them they would have to pick another subject.

In the epilogue Kirk wrote in 1989 for the reissue of his 1956 book, *Prospects for Conservatives*, he included a list of "zealots and charlatans" who should be avoided by "folk of conservative inclination." Kirk included "those who demand that the national parks be sold to private developers ... those who declare that 'the test of the market' is the whole of political economy and of morals ... those who assure the public that great corporations can do no wrong ... and various other folk who abjure liberalism but seem incapable of conserving anything worth keeping."

Of course, Kirk held his share of less than commendable beliefs. He had Burke's dislike of democracy and love of hierarchy. And he betrayed traces of anti-Semitism in blaming Jewish neoconservatives—and their ties to Israel—for the Reagan and Bush administrations' quest to remake the world in America's image. Sadly, a high-toned anti-Semitism seems to be the price America has to pay for its cultural conservatives, from Henry Adams and Albert Jay Nock to Dwight Macdonald and Kirk.

I met Karl Hess in 1983. He was living in a small town in West Virginia, where he worked as a potter and sculptor and raised his own food. On weekends he would sell his wares at Washington's Eastern Market, which is where I met him. Hess was born in Washington, D.C., in 1924 and was raised by his mother, who was a switchboard operator. He quit school at 15 and became a reporter for the old *Washington Times-Herald* and then for *Newsweek*. In the early '60s he joined the fledgling American Enterprise Institute, where he met Barry Goldwater and became his speechwriter. Hess drafted the Arizonan's speech at the 1964 Republican National Convention and is often given credit for the line, "Extremism in the

defense of liberty is no vice," although primary credit for the phrase should go to political scientist Harry Jaffa.

Hess, like Goldwater, was an anti-statist. But after Goldwater's defeat, he became wary of the state's military reach as well. As the United States became tangled in Vietnam, Hess abandoned the right for the left, eventually becoming an associate of the Institute for Policy Studies in the early '70s. He also shed his suburban lifestyle, moving to the Adams-Morgan area of Washington. He gave up journalism and speechwriting for welding and became a bearded middle-aged hippie.

Still, Hess never embraced the Marxism of the left. "I served capitalism very faithfully for very many years. And now, like most servants, I know a good deal about it in both its dress clothes and work clothes, even without any clothes at all," he wrote in his 1975 autobiography, *Dear America*. "I know I have lost my faith in capitalism, but I haven't lost my mind. I would not trade service to the cashiers for service to the commissars."

Hess eventually became a member of the Libertarian Party. In 1992 he tried to run for governor of West Virginia on the Libertarian ticket, but couldn't gather enough signatures to get on the ballot.

But Hess wasn't a classic libertarian, either. He believed in the visible hand of the craftsman, not in the invisible hand of the market. In *Capitalism for Kids*, published in 1988, he warned young entrepreneurs, "You probably want to make money.

There's nothing wrong with that. ... But I hope that you want to do more than just make money."

I met Christopher Lasch only once, but I talked to him several times on the phone. Unlike Hess and Kirk, he lived an outwardly conventional life. A graduate of Harvard, where he roomed with John Updike, he received a Ph.D. in history from Columbia and then taught at a succession of universities, ending up at the University of Rochester. But like Hess and Kirk, Lasch was wary of commercial success. In 1979 he withdrew *The Culture of Narcissism* from consideration for the National Book Award because he didn't want to be rewarded simply for writing a best-seller. One colleague described him as "the most serious man I've ever met."

Lasch, who was born in 1933, was initially a member of the professorial left. During the '60s he wrote articles and books critical of cold war liberalism and participated in teach-ins against the Vietnam War. But he kept his distance from the new left's anti-intellectualism. In a celebrated battle within the historical profession, Lasch opposed activist Staughton Lynd's bid in 1969 to become president of the American Historical Association. While universities shouldn't serve the immediate needs of the state or the corporation, Lasch believed, they also shouldn't become instruments of left-wing politics.

Over the next decade Lasch took up the defense of another embattled institution—the family. Writing in *Haven in a Heartless World*, published in 1977, Lasch argued that corporate capitalism was undermining fam-

continued on page 24





Left to right: Sunil Velagapudi, Robin Watkins, Kristin Bardwell.



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ily life, throwing parents and children at the mercy of credentialed experts and unscrupulous advertisers. "Increasingly, the same forces that have impoverished work and civic life invade the private realm and its last refuge, the family," Lasch wrote.

But Lasch also attacked the militant wings of the women's and gay liberation movements, both of which stood then for the restructuring, even the abolition, of the traditional family. Lasch argued that these movements were reinforcing the worst trends in American capitalism, leading to the neglect of children and the fear of intimacy. Lasch was also one of the first left-wing academics to defend then-professor Daniel Patrick Moynihan's work on the decline of the black family.

In *The True and Only Heaven*, published in 1991, Lasch drew away from Marxism toward what he called "populism": a concern with reinvigoration of family, neighborhood and work and with a "more strenuous and

morally demanding definition of the good life." By then, he was scorned by the left and adored by the right. But he remained outside either camp. While he was critical of liberal support for abortion, affirmative action and busing, he was contemptuous of conservatives who supported "family and neighborhood" while championing "unregulated business enterprise, which has replaced neighborhoods with shopping malls and superhighways."

Kirk, Hess and Lasch typified the best in American intellectuals: independent, immune to commercial success and popular favor. They also bore out the superficiality of political classifications. Kirk's conservatism, Hess's libertarianism and Lasch's populism were virtually identical in their regard for what Burke termed "the little platoon we belong to in society." They stand as reminders that even the most liberal or progressive philosophy must be anchored in a thoughtful conservatism. •

Russia's new—and divided—lodestar.

THE CASE FOR ORTHODOXY

By James H. Billington

Chudo ("a miracle") was the word everyone used on the morning of August 21, 1991, when it became evident that the Communist coup attempt was unraveling. The largest armed force and most ruthless political machine of modern times had just been faced down by an eclectic crowd defending Yeltsin's White House with no more than 150 armed professional soldiers at its core. It *was* a miracle—in part of modern communications. But the new technologies called up older, more powerful ideals in a culture based on a pictorial theology as much as the West is based on a verbal theology.

I felt this in Moscow already on August 19, the first day of the coup attempt, when there was almost no sure information about what was happening. In Russian icons, the face and hands are the only parts of holy figures left uncovered. And Russians immediately contrasted the weak expression and trembling hands of coup leader Vice President Gennadi Yanayev at his televised press conference with the widely reproduced picture of Yeltsin's warm smile and firm but beckoning fist at his first appearance on the balcony of the White House.

The symbols continued. St. George slaying the dra-

gon provided the first and most prevalent image to appear among the defenders of Yeltsin's White House during the forty-eight hours of resistance to the coup. After the putsch collapsed, Russians were brought together emotionally by the quasi-religious burial procession for the three young men killed during the coup attempt. Memories were evoked of the first native Russian saints, Boris and Gleb, young medieval princes who voluntarily accepted death in order to prevent dissension in the Russian land. And the classic totalitarian avoidance of individual responsibility seemed to end with the moving words addressed to the parents of the three fallen martyrs: "Forgive me, your president, that I was not able to protect and defend your sons."

"Forgive me" is what Russians say to each other before taking communion. They are the last words uttered by an earlier Boris in Russia's greatest national opera, *Boris Godunov*. "Forgive us" were the words on many of the bouquets sent to Andrei Sakharov's funeral in December 1989. Almost with those words alone, Yeltsin seemed to reinvest power with higher authority. Someone blameless was assuming responsibility in a society where people in power never used to accept responsibility for anything. And he did it in the language of faith.

With the collapse of the world's first atheist state, the

JAMES H. BILLINGTON's most recent book is *Russia Transformed: Breakthrough to Hope* (The Free Press).

historic religion of Russia has emerged as the central cultural force in the country's new national self-consciousness. As a cohering ideology, Orthodoxy has replaced communism as the lodestar of Russian society. Along with the army, the Church is one of the few national institutions that is still respected. Articulate priests are in demand on television talk shows. In last autumn's clash between executive and legislature, both sides turned to the Church for arbitration. Politicians of all stripes are now as reflexively deferential to the Church as they were once contemptuous of it.

Yet this very increase in prestige and visibility has exposed a split that has always existed in Russian Orthodoxy between its historic alliance with state power and its spiritual connection with ordinary believers. This conflict between the priestly and prophetic side of Christianity has been particularly intense in Russia—ever since the clash of the more wealthy monastic “possessors” with the ascetic and spiritual “nonpossessors” at the beginning of the sixteenth century. This conflict now has added salience. Whether the Orthodox Church can wrest itself from the state and become the conscience of the nation will be important in determining whether Russia can discover a new, democratic and civil culture or will return to a dark and threatening authoritarianism.

The battle between power and spirituality within the Orthodox Church deepened under communism. The Soviet state confronted the Church with both a more crippling stick and a more poisoned carrot than the state had ever met before. As more archival material comes to light, it becomes clearer that no other Christian community in modern times suffered a greater martyrdom than Russian Orthodox believers endured during the Soviet era. The destruction of religion was a central, early fixation of Lenin—not just a Stalinist aberration. One of a large number of bloodthirsty orders of Lenin that have recently emerged includes, for example, the reluctance of a local church to hand over its religious treasures to the state. Lenin ordered that 100 priests be rounded up immediately, hanged and left to putrify in public as a lesson to the nation. The church, which had re-established an independent patriarchate during the 1917 revolution, was subjected to prolonged humiliation. Nearly every major Russian religious thinker or leader was either exiled in the 1920s or killed in the 1930s. Old women in the gulags who wanted to conduct Easter services were forced to hold them knee-deep in water that was freezing around them.

The Russian Church defeated early Bolshevik efforts

to supplant it by a puppet “renovationist” church, but made its Faustian bargain with communism in 1927, accepting a narrowly liturgical survival in return for docile support of Soviet policies. A young believer wrote a farewell letter (much discussed in recent months) to his parents explaining why he was going off into the woods rather than accept the Church's new Babylonian captivity: “I will not come again out of the wilderness . . . until the wrath of God passes over our country. Forgive me for leaving you, and repent before it is too late. Later on you will not be able to break free.”

After a brief revival during the war, the Russian Church was brutalized anew by Khrushchev, who shut half of the remaining churches and most of its surviving seminaries between 1959 and 1962. The survivors were forced into a firmer support of Soviet political positions in the World Council of Churches.

Recently released archival materials show that there were links between the KGB and many members of the ruling synod of the Church during the last quarter-century of communism. Metropolitan Yuenali of Krutitsy and Kolomna, the main episcopal see for the Moscow area, and Metropolitan Pitirim of Volokolamsk and Yur'ev, head of the patriarchal publishing house, were given KGB code names of “Adamant” and “Abbat,” respectively. The former metropolitan Filaret of Kiev (code name “Antonov”) was a particularly compliant state servant since he was hiding the fact that he had secretly fathered a family by his housekeeper. The Church made a pact with power

under late communism that rendered it a partial handmaiden in the continued persecution of believers. The hierarchy that collaborated is still largely in place, and has since added to its ranks even more reactionary figures, such as Metropolitan Ioann of Petersburg, an openly anti-Semitic extremist. The ruling body of metropolitans is described by reformist journalists as “our last surviving Soviet institution” and by young seminarians as the *Mitropolitburo*.

Happily, however, there is another powerful current in the post-Soviet Orthodox Church. I vividly remember a passionate late-night conversation with a parish priest in Moscow in 1987. It took place at the scholarly conference with which the Church hierarchy was opening its year-long celebration of 1,000 years of Russian Christianity. The priest called me up in order to tell me how misplaced the atmosphere of triumphalism was for a church that had never had the courage to pray publicly for those in the camps and that needed to repent before it could celebrate. This thirst for purification is



strong among new young converts to Christianity. A recent poll by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center shows that 30 percent of Russians under 25 have converted from atheism to a belief in God; and there has been enormous growth in religious activity. Between 1988 and 1993 the number of active churches in greater Moscow grew from fifty to 250. As the aging hierarchy above is faced with a resurgence of youthful faith from below, there are not enough trained priests to serve the new clientele (a shortage made acute by the independence of Ukraine, which traditionally supplied a high percentage of Russian Orthodox priests).

A number of new (and some old) Russian parishes have sought to transfer their episcopal allegiance to the émigré Russian Orthodox Church, which never accepted Soviet authority and always honored the "new martyrs" of the Communist era. There have also been enough converts to Catholicism and to Protestant fundamentalism to have caused the hierarchy to press for discriminatory legislation against foreign-based faiths (laws passed by the old Supreme Soviet, but never signed by Yeltsin).

The two factions in the Church—nationalistic hard-liners seeking authoritarian discipline and new-style believers attempting to reform Orthodoxy from within—also hold different views of the role of the Church in society. One sees the Russian Church providing a unifying national identity for a rejuvenated traditional state. The other sees the Church providing the moral basis for building a responsible society independent of state structures.

The partisans of an authoritarian re-establishment of Orthodoxy range from pious, moderate monarchists (a recent poll found 30 percent of Russians sympathetic to a restoration of royalty) to crypto-fascists, such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who seem to want a purely ethnic Orthodoxy cleansed of Christian content. The authoritarian wing of the hierarchy has adopted the theory that the present Westernizing reforms, like the earlier changes under the Bolsheviks, are products of a Jewish-led international conspiracy to undermine the essential identity of the Russian people. Their faith, like that of Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor, is to be maintained by mystery and authority. It attaches extraordinary importance to venerating the remains of past saints newly exhumed (St. Seraphim at Deievo, St. Ambrose at Optina) and to maintaining the liturgy in Church Slavonic.

The partisans of reform base their faith more on Christian witness at the local, parish level. They have martyrs such as Father Aleksandr Men, the most gifted Christian teacher of his era, who was murdered with an ax in September 1990; prophets such as Father Aleksandr Borisov, founder of the ecumenical Russian Bible Society; evangelists such as Father Georgi Kochetkov, a dynamic preacher who created in the first two years of his new Moscow parish a higher Orthodox theological school with 1,300 enrollment and a children's Sunday

School for 350. And there are saints, such as the monk Zinon from Pskov, who has revived the art of painting icons as an act of worship and has written movingly about the need to assume individual responsibility for moral behavior and for the stewardship of private property. Perhaps the leading lay Orthodox thinker is the great Byzantinist, Sergei Averintsev, who will soon publish a major book reconciling the new reformism in political and economic life with Russian Orthodox faith and culture.

Both sides of this conflict see Orthodoxy as a bulwark against the corruption and decadence the new freedoms permit, and see the Orthodox liturgy as the pearl of great price that the Church preserved throughout the Soviet era and now offers as the pathway to salvation. The reformers are not doctrinally liberal; but they are more concerned with the traditions of spiritual counseling by "elders" proven in sanctity and with the moral example set by the "new martyrs" of the Soviet era than with old-style hierarchical discipline. They give more prominence to sermons and Scripture (a children's Bible published in 1991 soon became Russia's best-selling book among adults), and follow the recommendations of the Church Council of 1917-1918 to sing the liturgy in the vernacular rather than in unintelligible Church Slavonic.

In a sense, the conflict within the Church is only the latest version of the old struggle between the possessors and the nonpossessors. The authoritarians want to build on the privileged position that Orthodoxy obtained in the late Soviet period to become a force for social discipline and for the periodic purging of corrupting foreign influences. For them, Russia itself is a martyred nation—victimized by a series of materialistic Western ideas: liberalism in the late Tsarist period, Marxism in the Soviet period and now market economics.

The reformers, on the other hand, want to renew the nation's Orthodox commitment by internal, individual moral revival and a total catharsis of the Soviet legacy. They tend to see past hierarchical collaboration with Soviet authorities as an argument not so much for selective purges of the Church leadership as for some kind of cleansing corporate act of ecclesiastical repentance by the Church as a whole. For many of the newly converted young Orthodox, both within and without the clergy, the need for a totally fresh start is so profound that they are increasingly willing to seek individual spiritual rebirth in conversion to Catholicism or (more often) to evangelical Protestantism and Pentecostalism because of official Orthodoxy's perceived indifference to genuine institutional rebirth.

The movement for deeper renewal draws strength from a small but growing body of fellow Christians who seek to support rather than convert the Orthodox—particularly among the relatively liturgical Lutheran and Anglican communions, but also among some Calvinists anxious to re-establish conciliar methods of church governance. Theological power has been provided by other Orthodox communions, particularly

from the United States and from the ancient Church in Georgia. American Orthodoxy produced or sheltered the three most respected recent Russian Orthodox theologians, Aleksandr Schmemman, John Meyendorff and Georges Florovsky. The lay ranks of Georgian Orthodoxy produced the most important and influential artistic accomplishment of the late Soviet era, the great Christian movie *Repentance*. It made the destruction of a Church the central image of totalitarianism and ended with an old lady asking for the road to that church and being told that the church no longer existed. The last line of the film (and the last publicly spoken by Georgia's most celebrated actress, who died shortly thereafter) was "What is the use of a road if it doesn't lead to a church?"

The question today is not so much whether or not the road will lead to a church, but to *what kind of church* is Russia's road leading? Much depends on the Patriarch Alexis. There seems little doubt he had the usual amicable relations with high Soviet authorities, particularly during his long ecclesiastical career in his native Estonia (where he was made bishop at the earliest possible age of 32 in 1961, at the height of the Khrushchev persecution of the Church). And he continues to be embarrassed by a description of him in 1974 by the then-vice president of the Soviet government's Council for Religious Affairs as one of the most loyal Russian bishops, who accepted a "lack of interest" in strengthening religion. In fact, however, the Church in Estonia fared reasonably well under his long stewardship; and since he became metropolitan of Leningrad in 1986 and patriarch in 1990, he has shown two qualities that are essential if there is to be an inner transformation rather than just an imperial revival of the Orthodox Church in Russia. Patriarch Alexis seems to be both authentically pastoral and deeply committed to education.

The London-based Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, the leading Russian Orthodox clergyman in the English-speaking world, described Alexis, before he was patriarch as "an excellent parish priest"; and in several conversations I have had with him since he became patriarch he always seemed most animated when speaking of his unprecedentedly heavy schedule of visits to grass-roots parishes all over Russia. His first pronouncement after he was named patriarch was not the usual bland expression of pieties, but a confrontational demand for the full right of the Church to be a popular teaching institution as well as a place of worship. And he brought with him from Leningrad to Moscow, as his "secretary for research," Konstantin Logachev, who was, like the Church's foreign minister, Metropolitan Cyril, a protégé of the late Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad, the leading apostle of enlightenment within the Church during the dark last days of Brezhnev. Logachev published the popular new children's Bible and other new works designed to give a higher pedagogic content to the Church's long moribund publication program. The patriarch himself took an active part in the formal founding of the Russian Bible

Society in October 1991. In several subsequent trips abroad, Patriarch Alexis also seemed receptive to pluralism and ecumenical openness, and he dissociated himself and the Church from anti-Semitism.

As the entire political center of gravity in Russia has moved to the right in recent months, the patriarch seems to be trimming his reformist sails. He has moved to discipline not only the most prominent reformist activist among Orthodox clergy, Gleb Yakunin, but also the apolitical, modernist Father Kochetkov. There has been no comparable discipline—or even public repudiation—of the increasingly nationalistic rhetoric of Metropolitan Ioann from the patriarch's former diocese in Petersburg or of the many others who seem sympathetic to either Zhirinovskiy or the leader of the October violence, Aleksandr Rutskoi. The latter's popular appeal is in part based on his public embrace of Orthodoxy and his claim to have been guided by visions of the Mother of God at crucial points in recent history.

Particularly remarkable was the recent public signing of a concordat between the patriarch and Defense Minister Pavel Grachev urging the creation of a kind of ecclesiastical chaplain corps in order to restore moral teaching in the armed forces. Leading clerical reformers have expressed relief that Russia's leading public reading room for religious literature of all kinds is located in Moscow's public Library for Foreign Literature, run by a strong Orthodox democrat, Ekaterina Genieva, rather than in a hierarchy-controlled institution where "so much Western writing might no longer be acceptable to our chauvinists in cassocks."

Russians describe the current period as a *smuta*, or "time of troubles": a chaotic interregnum like that of the early seventeenth—and twentieth—century, when anarchy ended only with the establishment of yet another autocracy. Today's struggle between a repressive and a responsible political future for Russia is waged within the Church to which Russians have always tended to turn in times of trouble. Father Zinon, the monastic icon painter, has warned that Russian Orthodoxy is at a crossroads: it will either lapse again into a state religion or become the leaven in a new life of prayer, hard work and Christian education that will renew local communities in which private property and individual rights will be respected. Such a vision is not just compatible with, but conducive to, democracy.

The Orthodox believe that God's all-permeating presence gives to each person everywhere an uplifting vertical dimension for his or her life. Seeking to go forward and Westward in search of new human freedoms, more and more Russians are simultaneously turning back and looking East to rediscover their older, half-forgotten sense of theological responsibility. Would-be prophets and politicians alike are proclaiming once again in the midst of Russia's present darkness, *ex oriente lux*. But there is still no clear answer to the question posed by Russia's greatest modern religious thinker, Vladimir Solovyev, just a century ago: "Which East shall we become—the East of Xerxes or of Christ?" •

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Seen Twice

Two films from Italy deal with the same current Italian agony: the murder of those who are investigating crime. This agony had long been the doing of the Mafia; to it (we're told) has been added the savagery of corrupt government and military people.

La Scorta (First Look) is translated as *The Bodyguards*; more strictly, it's *The Escort*. The screenplay by Graziano Diana and Simona Izzo focuses on a group of young plainclothesmen assigned to protect a magistrate newly arrived in Trapani, a Mafia stronghold in Sicily. The magistrate's job is to investigate bribery and malfeasance; the escort's job is to keep him alive.

The screenplay does its work well by not, in any large way, surprising us. The surreal effect is as if this magistrate and his guards had boarded a train irrevocably bound for a dark destination: or as if they had all voluntarily been enclosed in a form of art—like the sonnet or sonata—that had its ordained shape and conclusion. Compliments on the courage of such men, gratitude for the reminder that ethical imperatives actually exist in our time, would be insolent.

The performances are all clear, unheroic. Carlo Cecchi, well-known in the Italian theater, gives a sort of bitter nobility to the magistrate. But the bodyguards are the main subject, including their personal lives. Among them, Enrico Lo Verso, who was outstanding as the policeman in *Stolen Children*, is less outstanding here, but only because all of the men are good.

La Scorta was directed by Ricky Tognazzi, son of the invaluable actor Ugo

Tognazzi (*Il Federale*, *La Grande Bouffe*, etc., etc.). The son, born in 1955, has been working in films and T.V. for some years, occasionally as actor, often as assistant director and director. *La Scorta* is his third feature, and, from start to finish, it shows a sure hand. Tognazzi never falters, never overstates. He simply puts the story before us, one ineluctable move after another.

The same factual materials, in essence, are the basis of **The Long Silence** (Intra). This time the setting, in Felice Laudadio's screenplay, is Milan, and the criminals are in higher positions; but the magistrate and the bodyguards are more or less the same, and our admiration and numbness are more or less the same.

Still, there are substantive differences from *La Scorta* because the director here was Margarethe von Trotta, the distinguished German filmmaker who has lately been working in Italy. As she has often shown before, von Trotta has two special interests: the condition of

women in our world and the condition of politics. Both of those concerns are much more prominent here than they are in Tognazzi's film.

The magistrate in *The Long Silence* has a wife, and they are deeply devoted to each other, their devotion undeterred by circumstances. The opening shot shows the couple sporting along a beach. The camera then pulls back to show that they are being escorted by five or six plainclothesmen.

The story—again, terribly familiar—is told chiefly from the wife's view, as would be expected in a von Trotta film. This wife is also a professional, a gynecologist, and the counterpointing of two careers is part of the fabric. It's hardly tipping a surprise—anyway, it's necessary—to note that the wife is eventually made a widow. The bulk of the film is about her efforts to help find the criminals and to organize the many widows of murdered officials to pressure and protest.

Throughout, the matters that the magistrate has investigated are shown to be more than graft: they involve national and international machinations. Power in this film is as important as money. The widow's struggles with that power to find justice are reminiscent of the passion of Julianne to find the truth about her sister's death in von Trotta's masterpiece, *Marianne and Julianne*.

One way that von Trotta emphasizes the woman's view in *The Long Silence* is by having the husband's death, and the subsequent death of a colleague, occur off-screen. As against *La Scorta*, which concentrates on men, we see no murders. Deaths come to women by report, as they go about other business. This woman turns on the T.V. and finds out that her husband is dead.

But this woman refuses the role of Penelope, submissively waiting for her husband to return or not to return. She moves; and she pays for it. We sense that the conspirators resent her abandonment of woman's proper place in these matters as much as they resent her potential threat.

The woman is played by Carla Grav-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Four Weddings and a Funeral. A bright British comedy about ... four weddings and a funeral. Hugh Grant gambols through, accompanied by Andie MacDowell. (Reviewed 4/4/94) **Sunday's Children.** Ingmar Bergman's autobiographical screenplay directed by his son, Daniel. The boy Ingmar and the man juxtaposed with his clergyman father. More somber than it seems, though it looks lovely. (5/16/94) **A Tale of Winter.** Again Eric Rohmer puts love under a sort of Gallic microscope, rewardingly. A young woman bears the burden of early love in her later affairs. (5/9/94) **Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould.** François Girard has found a unique prismatic way to give us fascinating glimpses of Gould's strengths and quirks. (4/25/94) —SK

ina, who has both seen and unseen beauty. She moves through the film like a graceful presence decked with shadows. Her mother is played by Alida Valli, born in 1921, long loved for her performances in *Senso* and *The Third Man*, among numerous others. A viewer who has never seen Valli will nonetheless know that this beautiful white-haired woman brings with her knowledge of life and self, along with the means to enact it. Von Trotta's direction is everywhere sound, always discreet yet warm.

A coincidence. The scores of both of these films were written by Ennio Morricone, the Italian one-man music mill. The score of *La Scorta* is one of Morricone's best: it has lots of color, lots of broad quasi-Mascagni strokes. In *The Long Silence* the music is down to the usual Morricone level, blatant, hyper-

dramatic, trite. During a memorial service it's particularly bad—the worst kind of shimmer, together with a soprano chorus. I don't understand why von Trotta tolerated it.

The Long Silence is part of the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, which this year features a von Trotta retrospective as well as the American premiere of her new picture. The festival is the fifth in what has become a welcome annual event, consisting this year of some seventy films of different lengths from different countries. It has played in New York, is moving to Los Angeles and will go to other cities. Look for it if it comes to your city, which I hope. No one, I suppose, can see all the films, but the list is greatly worth study and selection. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Separated by a Common Playwright

Now that so many American dramatists (David Mamet, Richard Nelson, Arthur Miller et al.) have started premiering their plays in London, you would think that New York had turned into Philadelphia or Boston, less a venue for new work than another stop on the road. Most of the more impressive New York productions in recent weeks have also been English imports—the powerful *Medea* of Diana Rigg, Nicholas Hytner's exquisite rendering of *Carousel*, Stephen Daldry's imaginative resuscitation of *An Inspector Calls*, Adrian Noble's stunning *A Winter's Tale* (which I'll get to in a moment)—so I feel almost sheepish about having flown to London to review them. With a little patience I could have stayed home, saving the flight fares and hotel bills, and covered the tours.

Arthur Miller didn't open *Broken Glass* abroad, but I'll bet he wishes he had. He may not be able to rouse much admiration for his new plays in this country, but he's a living monument in England. Indeed, he has virtually become that country's playwright-laureate. Miller's collected works (including his adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*) are periodically revived to great acclaim, and all the youth of England are on fire to imitate him. If the United States and Great Britain have sometimes been identified as two nations separated by a common tongue, we are now two countries sepa-

rated by a common playwright. *Broken Glass* may very well dazzle the critics and delight the public when it is eventually produced in London. Here it seems like just another spiral in a stumbling career.

I'm happy for Miller that he has an artistic home, and it is regrettable that, along with Williams and (until recently) Albee, he has not been locally appreciated in his later years. There was a time when Miller was regarded as America's greatest playwright, indeed the culminating figure in the Western dramatic tradition (one anthology was called *From Aeschylus to Arthur Miller*). Today, he's lucky to be published by Samuel French. My regret about Miller's declining reputation, however, doesn't change my opinion of his style, which often seems plodding, pedestrian, predictable and a little pompous. It continues to baffle me how moral preachments in lumbering prose could once have passed for major modern tragedies, and I have a suspicion that if his early reputation had been less inflated, he might enjoy more respect today. Still, an Old Vic version of *The Crucible* some years back (directed by Laurence Olivier) gave that play a loftiness and magnitude it never enjoyed in its American incarnations, and it may well be that the reason the English so admire Miller is that they are able to produce him with the grandeur of Shakespearean tragedy rather than (as here) with the prosaic flatness of a sociological primer.

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Perhaps the English will manage to streamline the creaky machinery of *Broken Glass*, but at present it looks very old-fashioned and clunky. The time is 1938, the year of *Kristallnacht*. The heroine, a Brooklyn housewife named Sylvia Gellburg, is paralyzed from the waist down because, as we later learn, she's been obsessing on the looming Holocaust. She needs others to sympathize with her fears, but her husband is a man who denies his Jewishness (also, apparently, his sexual drive, since he hasn't slept with her in twenty years). A dour conservative who forecloses on properties for a gentile firm, Gellburg pretends his family name is Finnish and takes pride in his West Point son because he gives lectures on artillery and twice spoke to Gen. MacArthur. Harry Hyman, the doctor they consult, explains (and *explains*), with all the gravity of Paul Muni discovering a serum for smallpox, that Gellburg's wife is possessed not with a virus (as she suspects) or a dybbuk (as Gellburg suspects) but with hysterical symptoms. Eureka! The cure he suggests is sexual, that Gellburg sleep with his own wife. The doctor has apparently been thinking of applying that treatment himself because at one point he advises Sylvia to "imagine we've made love and you're telling me secret things."

I know it's hard to believe, but I think we're being told that all Sylvia needs to walk again is a little poke from someone who really hates the Nazis. Although Gellburg pretends that he once made love to her and she didn't remember, neither he nor Hyman succeeds in applying the proposed therapy. Instead, this self-hating Jew is forced to confront his own Jewishness after concluding that his gentile employer may be anti-Semitic; the boss suspects him of collusion in a property deal with a pushy landsman named Alan Gershowitz (Alan Dershowitz should sue). This revelation leads to a heart attack and Gellburg's eventual death. I'm told that Miller wrote a number of different endings for the play. The one he chose is borrowed from old MGM movies. The instant Gellburg dies, his wife rises unsteadily from her wheelchair as the curtain descends. I imagined I heard Peter Sellers in the background shouting: "*Mein Führer*, I can walk!"

I'm sorry to be so beastly about *Broken Glass*, but it really is a shaky piece of stage architecture. Located at the corner of Cliché Avenue and Banal Boulevard, the play is riddled with such rhetorical self-parodies as "This will all pass" and "This is a whole life we're talking about" and (more inscrutably) "How can there be Jews if there's no God?" Clearly, Miller has been furrowing a lot lately about what it means to be a Jew, and is once again saying (to quote from *Inci-*

dent at Vichy) "I don't want your guilt, I want your responsibility." It is hard to give him either, when his own Jewish identity has previously not been very strong, or even conspicuous enough to create Jewish characters (cf. the ethnic vagueness of Willy Loman), except in an early novel called *Focus*, where the hero is a gentile *mistaken* for a Jew. Miller comes to the subject of Jewish self-hatred quite a few years after everyone else has exhausted it, which may explain why his plot seems inspired by '50s movies such as *Gentleman's Agreement* or '50s plays such as Chayefsky's *The Tenth Man*, and why the dramaturgical technique is worthy of the Golden Age of Television.

As for the production, it might have won Emmys for the Philco Playhouse. John Tillinger has tried to match Miller's moral earnestness by substituting momentum for depth, staging *Broken Glass* as if it were a lay lecture on Freud's *Studies in Hysteria*. This may explain why such a normally sensitive designer as Santo Loquasto has created such an antiseptic space, including a doctor's office that features the book-lined decor of a law firm. It may also explain why such usually dependable American actors seem stuck in generalized performances. Ron Rifkin's Gellburg is something of an exception. Looking like a younger Hume Cronyn in a black three-piece suit, Rifkin throws all his force into this sour, mean, insensitive Brooklynite (his death scene, resembling an apoplectic fit, made me fear for his blood pressure). But he's stuck in two dimensions. Once having established the character, he fails to surprise us with it.

Amy Irving is an actress I've always admired as an ingenue, but as the aging, Brooklyn-accented Sylvia, she seems miscast, flat and static in her wheelchair. The part would have been better played by someone with the inner life of Anne Bancroft (whom she's beginning to resemble). David Dukes as Harry Hyman endeavors to do something that Ron Silver confessed his failure to do and quit, namely impersonate Arthur Miller ventriloquizing through the mouth of a Jewish doctor (a character combination, I admit, that might appeal to a number of marriageable Jewish girls). Frances Conroy brings her customary warmth to a small part and George N. Martin is properly repressed as Gellburg's gentile boss. But the climactic office scene struck me as a replay of the confrontation in *Death of a Salesman* where Willy gets the boot from his boss. In fact, much of *Broken Glass* is made up of fragments from a more shatterproof phase of Miller's career.

The Royal Shakespeare Company production of *A Winter's Tale* at the Brooklyn

Academy of Music, however, is a true delight—like all of Adrian Noble's Shakespeare readings, a genuinely fresh excursion into the text. This enigmatic play is rarely done well: Leontes' unaccountable pathological jealousy, the sudden shifts in time and weather, the alternation of tragedy, comedy, pastoral and even mythology (the noble babe exposed to the elements and rescued by shepherds, as well as the intervention of the Delphic oracle, seem borrowed from *Oedipus*)—all present a challenge to a unified production scheme. One way to approach the play, considering the resemblances of Leontes, Polixenes, Hermione and Paulina to Othello, Cassio, Desdemona and Emilia, is as a revision of *Othello* with a happy ending. (Indeed, a case could be made that all of Shakespeare's late romances are rosy revisions of his earlier tragedies.) Instead, Noble has chosen to treat it as a continuous Victorian celebration.

This *Winter's Tale* begins with a party within a rectangular scrimmed box, decorated with colorful helium balloons. Indeed, balloons are the central scenic element of Anthony Ward's fine setting (Autolycus makes his entrance flying in on huge green balloons that look like muscat grapes). The party is interrupted by Leontes' fit of Strindbergian madness, and John Nettles, looking like Anthony Quayle and sounding like Tom Courtenay, does a plausible, if somewhat restrained, job of playing party poop. The death of Mamillius, his son, is truly harrowing, since the boy is witness to really brutish parental behavior. And Suzanne Burden's Hermione, as well as Gemma Jones's Paulina, suggest that, no matter how much abuse they suffer, the women of Sicilia maintain their power and resolve.

But the charms of the play are reserved for the second part, when the action moves from Sicilia to Bohemia. Polixenes, now an aging king (one of Noble's inventions is to cast an older actor in the role who ages down in the first part instead of up in the second), visits the sheepshearing contest in disguise to spy on his son Florizel's affair with Perdita. The real focus of this scene, however, is the rogue Autolycus, played by the brilliant Mark Hadfield as a kind of Jonathan Pryce with sticky fingers, and the way he fleeces victims is a lesson in theatrical legerdemain. Hadfield is an accomplished vaudeville comedian, who circles among the shepherds (represented as boobs and bobby-soxers) like a nimble acrobat, singing along with a rustic oompah marching band, participating in phallic St. George dances and picking pockets (even his own) until he has emptied all their contents, down

to a used condom. The scene features the same kind of charming Tuscan high jinks that vitalized Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado about Nothing*. They are even more infectious and engaging here, enhancing a production distinguished more by its pastoral interludes than by its serious plot, largely because

the comics are so accomplished.

It is impossible to pay homage to all of this huge cast ("The world must be peopled," says one character, and it is, with an army of actors). I'll simply say that Noble's production of *A Winter's Tale* is a demonstration of theater at its most joyous and exhilarating. •

The Doctor's Plot

BY JAMES GLEICK

Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens

by John E. Mack, M.D.

(Charles Scribner's Sons, 432 pp., \$22)

In the world of professional wrestling, fans fall into two categories, known as the Smarts and the Marks. The Marks believe that they are watching spontaneous contests of strength and skill. The Smarts know that they are watching a fascinating, highly plotted, roughly scripted form of dramatic entertainment—a sort of sweaty soap opera. The Smarts and the Marks have a lot to talk about, though their conversation sometimes seems at cross-purposes. They have both developed an enthusiastic appreciation for the phenomenon, but on different levels. In the world of unidentified flying objects, John E. Mack (or, as his book jacket labels him, "John E. Mack, M.D., the Pulitzer Prize-winning Harvard psychiatrist") is a Mark masquerading as a Smart.

Mack believes that little gray aliens have been abducting Americans in large numbers and subjecting them to various forms of unwilling sex. (Yes, that again.) Mack also believes that, for a bunch of cosmic rapists, these aliens are a pretty benign bunch. They're trying to bring us in touch with our spiritual sides, or trying to remind us how important it is to care about the planet, or otherwise trying to help our consciousness evolve. But you already know this—unless you've missed him these past few weeks on "Oprah," in *The New York Times Magazine*, on "48 Hours" and in supermarket tabloids, talk shows and news programs across the country.

Alien-abduction mythology has been one of this country's tawdry belief manias since the 1960s. It is a leading case of the anti-rational, anti-science cults that are flourishing with dismaying vigor in the United States, and with dismayingly little counterbalance from peo-

ple who ought to know better. UFOs in general, paranormals who bend spoons, parapsychologists who sense spiritual auras, crystal healers, believers in reincarnation, psychic crime-solvers—all of these natural descendants of tarot-readers and crystal ball-gazers get uncritical television time and newsprint. It's a dangerous trend. The blurring of distinctions between real knowledge and phony knowledge leaves all of us more vulnerable to faith-healers and Holocaust-deniers of all sorts.

The new wave of marketing the abduction myth has been grotesquely effective. *The New York Times Book Review* chose to give Mack's new book a major illustrated review written by another psychiatrist who has spent time interviewing supposed abductees. This reviewer, James S. Gordon, criticizes some of Mack's methods, but hails him for giving "visibility to a phenomenon that is ordinarily derided," and concludes that Mack "has performed a valuable and brave service, enlarging the domain and generosity of the psychiatric enterprise."

Let's stop right here and consider, hypothetically, for the first and last time in this piece, the possibility that Americans really are being kidnapped by aliens in vast numbers. All right. We're undergoing a large-scale invasion by gangs of alien sex-abusers. There are hundreds of thousands or millions of victims, according to Mack and his fellow abduction proponents. To begin with, is this a matter that should be handled by psychiatrists? Wouldn't astronomers and physicists have some interest in the matter as well? Shouldn't these kidnappings be reported to law enforcement authorities? (They virtually never are.) Wouldn't they be of interest to the FBI, the military and, say, world leaders?

The publisher, Charles Scribner's Sons, promotes the book with a dust jacket claiming that these are "alien encounters reported in no previous book on UFOs," that they are "real experiences," that Mack's book is "above all authoritative." Do the editors believe this? According to the hype they are pushing on the public, one in fifty of their own friends and family has been abducted by these little gray rapists. Are they, in real life, worrying about it? Similarly, do the editors of the *Times Book Review*, or the television news directors who are helping promote this book with equal foolishness, seriously believe these claims? No, they do not. All these people are Smarts, at heart. Their news departments aren't wasting any time investigating the alien onslaught, though surely a galactic sex crime of this magnitude would be worth assigning at least as many reporters to as the question of whether the president's wife once made a killing in commodities.

"Statistics show that 4 million Americans have been abducted ..." began a Fox T.V. news item about the Mack book the other day. (It continued with unidentified footage of realistic-looking aliens, from a science fiction movie, of course. There are no standards left, it seems, in the world of television news.) We'll all be hearing this statistic incessantly in the next weeks, so it's worth showing once and for all where it comes from. It is the product of a 1991 study conducted by the Roper Organization under the sponsorship of abduction buffs, who mailed their interpretation of the results—titled *Unusual Personal Experiences: An Analysis of the Data from Three National Surveys*—to tens of thousands of mental health professionals.

The Roper pollsters read a list of experiences to 6,000 people and asked them whether they had undergone these experiences, as a child or an adult, "more than twice," "once or twice" or "never" (a construction that routinely generates more positive responses than the straightforward "ever" or "never"). The relevant experiences were:

- waking up paralyzed with a sense of a strange person or presence or something else in the room;
- experiencing a period of time of an hour or more, in which you were apparently lost, but you could not remember why, or where you had been;
- seeing unusual lights or balls of light in a room without knowing what was causing them, or where they came from;
- finding puzzling scars on your body and neither you nor anyone else remembering how you received them or where you got them;

• feeling that you were actually flying through the air although you didn't know why or how.

Most healthy people can answer yes to a few of these. I certainly can. They are all well-known feelings and dream types. Even the sinister-sounding scar question is an easy yes for many people (take a moment to examine your body carefully and you'll see what I mean). The answers to these five questions form the entire basis for the alien-abduction statistic. Are you wondering how a respectable survey organization could take this data and produce a claim that "one out of every fifty adult Americans may have had UFO/abduction experiences"? Easy. The authors had only to make a single fraudulent assumption: "Based upon the data we have collected, we decided to regard only [!] those respondents who answered 'yes' to at least four of our five key indicator questions as probable abductees." That was 119 people. Hence—simple arithmetic from here on—4 million Americans.

Perhaps Mack is embarrassed enough by the absurdity of this exercise not to rely on it heavily. He mentions it only once in his book. But he did put his Harvard Medical School imprimatur on the original report, writing the introduction and enclosing a helpful mail-in card for his readers.

The alien-abduction phenomenon began in 1966 with the case of Betty and Barney Hill. They were a New Hampshire couple who—years after having gotten lost one night in the White Mountains—read some UFO literature (the flying saucer craze was already two decades old), spent a fair amount of time with psychiatrists, finally underwent hypnosis and "remembered" having been kidnapped by aliens and subjected to various indignities. Scores of books, movies and television docudramas followed as the genre evolved—Barney Hill himself was portrayed by James Earl Jones. For the entertainment industry, this isn't a cultural nuisance; it's a cash cow. And every few years some author finds a new way to cash in, as Whitley Strieber did with his 1987 fiction-posing-as-nonfiction best-seller, *Communion*.

Mack has a new angle. "None of this

work," he writes,

in my view, has come to terms with the profound implications of the abduction phenomenon for the expansion of human consciousness, the opening of perception to realities beyond the manifest physical world and the necessity of changing our place in the cosmic order if the earth's living systems are to survive the human onslaught.

Of course, what really makes Mack different from the standard flying-saucer nut is that he's got authority. "Ordinarily," Oprah declared, "we would not even put people on television, on our show certainly, who make such bizarre claims. . . . But we were intrigued by this man. . . . Dr. Mack is a respected professor who teaches at Harvard University.

except to the extent that Mack and fellow gulls happen to be on campus.)

For readers, *Abduction* will seem a cross between the Strieber genre and the Nancy Friday sort of one-sexual-fantasy-after-another-as-told-to-me genre. Ed has sex in a "pod" with a silvery-blond alien and finds it "fulfilling" and "great." Catherine is forced to lie on a table naked and spread her legs while an alien with cold hands inserts an instrument into her vagina. Eva is fondled by three "midgets." And so on. It's all excruciatingly unpleasant and incoherent. Just about everyone gets painful needles in the brain or the leg, and just about everyone gets a lecture about pollution or global consciousness on the way out.

The core of Mack's belief is the following cocktail-party syllogism:

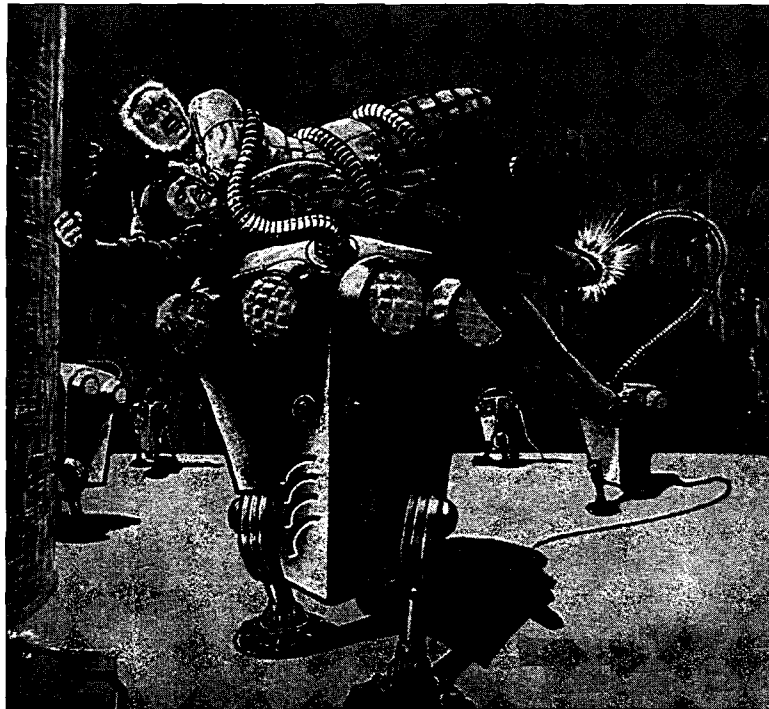
People think they were abducted.
They don't seem crazy.
We're experts on mental illness.
Therefore people were abducted.

It sounds more respectable in psychiatrist talk, naturally: "Efforts to establish a pattern of psychopathology other than disturbances associated with a traumatic event have been unsuccessful. Psychological testing of abductees has not revealed evidence of mental or emotional disturbance that could account for their reported experiences." Ergo . . .

No one, of course, remembers their abductions right away. These

aliens, clumsy as they are about anesthesia and scars, have a way of making the experience vanish from the conscious minds of all 4 million of their American victims. (Why is abduction such a peculiarly American phenomenon, by the way? Our national borders aren't visible through the portholes of those spaceships. Mack, of course, has an answer: abductions are global, but it's only in the United States that we are lucky enough to have large numbers of UFO-obsessed therapists to help people uncover their suppressed experiences.) Abduction psychiatrists like Mack need a method of helping people "remember," and that method is hypnosis.

You are getting sleepy . . . when you awake you will remember . . . Hypnosis is all about suggestion. It has always been a fringe practice, as useful to carnival magicians



COVER OF THE MAGAZINE WONDER STORIES (1933)

He is an eminent psychiatrist. . . . The promotion surrounding his new book leans heavily on his professional trappings. There is his status as a medical doctor and psychiatrist. There is his Pulitzer Prize (won not for anything to do with UFOs, of course, but for a biography of T.E. Lawrence published seventeen years ago). There is Harvard University, where Mack enjoys the comfort of academic tenure.

Mack's publicists—besides Scribner's, he uses a New Jersey firm, P.R. with a Purpose Inc.—are combining and recombining these elements in sleazy ways. A press release begins: "Abduction by aliens was not a topic taken seriously at Harvard University, until John E. Mack, a medical doctor and professor of psychiatry. . . ." (Of course, it is still not a topic "taken seriously" at Harvard,

and moviemakers as to clinical psychiatrists, and for every genuine buried memory unearthed by hypnotists, many more false memories have been implanted. At its best, the process is a conspiracy between hypnotist and willing subject. *Time* magazine has quoted one of Mack's subjects as saying that she was given UFO literature to read in preparation for her sessions and was asked obvious leading questions. Garry Trudeau has shined his own form of common sense on the process in a Doonesbury sequence that has a hypnotized subject saying, "Now I see a ... a blinding light." "It's a vehicle, isn't it? Some sort of space vehicle?" the hypnotist prompts. "I ... I can't tell. It has Nevada plates."

From a scientific point of view, Mack's anecdotes are grossly lacking in respectable methodology. He doesn't provide information about his hypnotic techniques, though he does give the impression that there's a lot of breathing involved. He provides no data from psychological tests. These are "time-consuming and expensive," he notes—gosh, right, in that case, why bother? There is nothing remotely resembling a control or a negative case. There is no explanation of how he selected *Abduction's* thirteen case studies from his total caseload of seventy-six, except for the following: "... there are abductees I have known longer or worked with in greater depth. If I have chosen not to tell their stories here it is because I could not do justice to the richness of their experiences in a sufficiently clear and concise manner." (In other words, there's even better stuff in his files—he just couldn't squeeze them into these 422 pages.)

It's never clear where Mack finds his subjects or who they are. They seem to be shuttled to him by the UFO/abduction network, and particularly by Budd Hopkins, author of two 1980s best-sellers on the phenomenon. It was Hopkins who introduced Mack in 1990 to his first four supposed victims and then began a regular series of referrals. Mack's anecdotal descriptions give only a cardboard sense of who they are: despite the torturous physical detail, there is little to flesh out his sweeping claim that "they seem to come, as if at random, from all parts of society." It seems safe to say that there's one kind of patient that Mack never sees: a person suffering from vague and unexplained feelings of anxiety or trauma who, without any familiarity with UFO books or movies and without any suggestion whatsoever on the part of psychiatrist or hypnotist, then remembers an abduction experience. If he had any of

those, it would be interesting to see the transcripts. In reality, though, by the time Mack sees them, his patients know very well what they're in for and have been well-prepped.

As for his own biases, Mack claims he began as a skeptic, but this he is clearly not. He's a firm believer, for example, in auras—"the energy fields around us that some especially sensitive people can see." He is certainly (much like his aliens) among the many people who began talking a lot over the past decade or two about saving the planet, protecting the environment, understanding spirituality and so forth. Mack seems to have been a '60s late-bloomer, falling belatedly and hard for Werner Erhard, Carlos Castaneda, est, Esalen and so forth. It's really no wonder his abductees find themselves getting such a warm dose of mind expansion along with the extraterrestrial sex abuse.

Mack never manages to discuss the world's most widely shown piece of popular entertainment on his subject, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, though surely many, if not all, of his patients saw Steven Spielberg's lovable little bug-eyed aliens long before they came up with their own memories of virtually identical aliens. In fact Mack's whole new mood about abductions isn't new at all. It's all there in *Close Encounters*: the Eastern mysticism, the spiritual save-the-planet denouement. (Remember the closing sound track of the original version? "When you wish upon a star, / Makes no difference who you are, / Anything your heart desires will come ... to ... you.")

The entire issue of contaminating influences is constantly being swept under Mack's rug. He writes at one point, "Eva had written in her journal that she had started to read Strieber's *Communion*, but discontinued it so as not to be 'influenced by anyone or anything.'" Oh, sure. Anyway, all this scientific, methodological criticism rolls off believers like water off a duck. It's merely "rational" or "empirical" or, worst of all, "Western" (generic terms of dismissal). Mack *knows* his hypnotism sessions are a collaboration, and he's unrepentant: "I cannot avoid the fact that a co-creative intuitive process such as this may yield information that is in some sense the product of the intermingling or flowing together of the consciousnesses of the two (or more) people in the room." He adds:

Something may be brought forth that was not there before in exactly the same form. Stated differently, the information gained in the sessions is not simply a remembered "item," lifted out of the experiencer's consciousness like a stone from a kidney. It may

represent instead a developed or evolved perception, enriched by the connection that the experiencer and the investigator have made.

From a Western perspective this might be called "distortion"; from a transpersonal point of view the experiencer and I may be participating in an evolution of consciousness.

Arguing with someone who uses language in this blousy manner is like dancing with smoke. It is useless to find errors in reasoning or logic. Logic? What a beggarly, earthbound affair. There are moments when you find yourself wondering whether even Mack knows what he's claiming. With all his harrowing descriptions of rapes and torture, he's still capable of retreating to, "... we do not know what an abduction really is—the extent, for example, to which it represents an event in the physical world or

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to which it is an unusual subjective experience with physical manifestations." This sounds almost sane. I would translate it into my boring kind of English as "we don't know whether abductions are real events or fantasies." And "physical manifestations" is a nice little addendum; it glides right past the fact that there are no physical manifestations, if this means tangible evidence the aliens might have left behind. They're wonderfully tidy about their needles and handcuffs.

Mack continues: "A still greater problem resides in the fact that memory in relation to abduction experiences behaves rather strangely." Why, yes! "... the memory of an abduction may be outside of consciousness"—translation: *nonexistent*—"until triggered"—translation: *created*—"many years later by another experience or situation that becomes associated with the original event." Such as, maybe, going to the drive-in and watching *Close Encounters*? Mack continues (and by the way, does Harvard offer its professors any course in remedial English?): "The experiencer in a situation such as this could be counted on the negative side of the ledger *before* the triggering experience and on the positive side *after* it." In plain language: it's hard to count the people who have been abducted, because if someone says he hasn't been abducted, he may just not remember—yet.

Though Mack is in all the machinery surrounding his book as true a believer as can be, still, in the actual text, he engages in a slippery form of rhetoric—as if somehow he still wanted to hedge his bets. He writes of "the actual experience (whatever the source of these experiences may ultimately prove to be)." What does John Mack really believe (assuming, of course, that the whole thing isn't just a calculated scam)? Does he have any curiosity about the technology of this species, on the one hand capable of passing through walls and beaming people about on rays of light, and on the other hand sometimes reduced to flagging down cars? Does he believe that creatures from another planet are grabbing our fellow humans, pinning them down and engaging in weird sex with them? Literally?

Well, yes—and no. Certainly he writes as though he does, but he also manages to avoid answering such tacky direct questions. Sometimes he switches over to writing in terms of "the abduction phenomenon" (Smartspeak) instead of "abductions" (Markspeak). Mack says, "Our use of familiar words like 'happening,' 'occurred' and 'real' will themselves have to be thought of differently,

less literally perhaps." It's a sickeningly corrupt style of hiding behind language. His writing is full of phrases drained of all meaning: "the collapse of space / time"; "the alien being opened Ed's consciousness." And there is always the ultimate hedge: "the problem of defining in what reality the abductions occur."

We know some realities in which they aren't occurring. They aren't occurring in the reality Mack calls "the ontological framework of modern science." This is the reality where we might be tripped up by things like "accepted laws of physics and principles of biology." They aren't occurring in "the Judeo-Christian tradition." Jews and Christians have become such stick-in-the-muds compared to (no surprise here) "Eastern religions, such as Tibetan Buddhism, which have always recognized a vast range of spirit entities in the cosmos. . . ." Things that, after all, could have really happened, are constantly happening in "converging time frames" or "another dimension." The game of let's-find-another-reality turns someone like me into such a party-pooper, having to fall back on the common-sense idea that reality is in fact . . . reality.

But it's not just a game. Mack is a practicing psychiatrist, and he's toying with real people. There is "Ed," who first got in touch with Mack in 1992 and "recalled" having been abducted, raped (not Mack's word) and lectured to about "the way humans are conducting themselves here in terms of international politics, our environment, our violence to each other, our food and all that"—all this having supposedly occurred thirty-one years earlier, in 1961, though Ed didn't begin to recall it until 1989.

In a chilling aside Mack writes that Ed and his wife, "Lynn," have had "a number of fertility problems, which may or may not be abduction-related, including three or four spontaneous terminations of Lynn's pregnancies." It's a reminder: this man is practicing medicine. He is telling patients that their miscarriages may be due to imaginary aliens. Why do the medical licensing boards permit this?

If Mack has any particular therapeutic goals for his patients—apart, that is, from raising his own consciousness—it's hard to see what they are. He's obviously the wrong person to help someone come to grips with the underlying causes of UFO fantasies and hallucinations, so what kind of therapy can he offer? Does he want to help patients adjust to the aftershock of a trauma akin to rape? Maybe, but he has bigger things in

mind—"personal growth" and "transformation," meaning becoming a better citizen of the planet, getting in touch with one's transcendent spiritual nature, etc. And why stop there? He finds that "abductees seem, especially once they confront and integrate their experiences, to be especially intuitive; they sometimes demonstrate strong psychic abilities, including clairvoyance or the ability to perceive at a distance."

Mack represents the most visible agent of an especially disturbing trend in the UFO landscape: mailings and publicity targeted specifically at psychologists and psychiatrists. Private organizations financed by abduction devotees are spending money to persuade these professionals that there is something clinically respectable about looking for UFOs along with, say, child abuse in their patients' troubled histories. Mack's own tax-exempt funding source is his Center for Psychology and Social Change. He also has a Program for Extraordinary Experience Research. These organizations want clinicians to look for abduction cases whenever they encounter such telltale symptoms as (I'm quoting from a 1992 Mack mailing to mental health professionals) "fears of the dark and of nightfall."

Sadly, in the age of depth psychology and transpersonal psychology, hypnotherapy and psychic healing, willing professional dupes are in ready supply. It seems that anything goes these days in the mental health business. Even more sadly, psychiatrists are exactly the people who should be treating the scores of people who think they have been abducted by aliens and who should be trying to understand the phenomenon.

For there is an abduction phenomenon, of course, and it's worth studying. Cultural historians might think fruitfully about the shared details of the mythology, at least to the extent that they can be disentangled from the influences of the self-referential movies and books to which victims have been exposed. Carl Sagan has pointed out similarities with old (pre-space-age) stories of incubi and succubi, witches and fairies. "Is it possible," he wrote,

that people in all times and places occasionally experience vivid, realistic hallucinations, often with sexual content—with the details filled in by the prevailing cultural idioms, sucked out of the zeitgeist? When everyone knows that gods regularly come down to Earth, we hallucinate gods; when everyone knows about demons, it's incubi and succubi; when fairies are widely believed, we see fairies; when the old myths fade and we begin thinking that alien beings are plausible, then that's where our hypnagogic imagery tends.

The problem is that, by and large, the Smarts aren't interested in arguing with the Marks. It seems unprofitable, when no amount of rational discourse can change the mind of a believer. A few worthy organizations devote themselves to this sort of thing, most notably the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, publishers of the *Skeptical Inquirer*. But most astronomers, physicists and paleontologists have better things to do, though they are the sorts of people best equipped to explain just how infinitely unlikely it is that our corner of the universe should be receiving alien visitors in such strikingly near-human form at just the eye-blink of history when we have discovered space travel. Outside of hard science, all too many academics have fallen into the literary conceit that anyone's version of reality is as valid as anyone else's, and here in the real world, it's a conceit with bad consequences.

Not that mental health workers have nothing to contribute to understanding phenomena like the abduction myth. On the contrary, scores or perhaps even hundreds of people *do* "remember" having been kidnapped by aliens, and this needs

to be understood. There is an explanation. As with so many belief manias, the explanation is unwelcome to many people: we are not fully rational creatures. Our minds are not computers. We see people, we hear voices, we sense presences that are not really there. If you have never seen the face of someone you know, in broad daylight, clear as truth, when in reality that person was a continent away or years dead, then you are unusual.

Our memories cannot be trusted—not our five-minute-old memories, and certainly not our decades-old memories. They are weakened, distorted, rearranged and sometimes created from wishes or dreams. With or without hypnosis, we are susceptible to suggestion. The painful irony is that of all the people—the Smarts—who should know these lessons and articulate them for the rest of us, none are better placed than professors of psychiatry.

JAMES GLEICK, the author of *Chaos: Making a New Science* (Penguin Books) and *Genius: The Life and Science of Richard Feynman* (Vintage), is founder of The Pipeline, a new gateway to the Internet.

in its own right to the entities behind those prizes, worth protecting for the value it confers on the prizes themselves. The more often the National Book Award spawns a best-seller, the more valuable that sales record makes the National Book Award, and the more important it thus becomes to bestow it upon books that will live up to everyone's expectations so the value of the prize isn't diminished.

"There is no doubt that people like to see their names in print with a little pat of butter attached," wrote Bernard Darwin, Charles's grandson and a Dickens scholar, and these bookish prizes are as close as the literary establishment comes to the Academy Awards—the night of the living pats of butter. It isn't too cynical, nor is it necessarily a discredit to the talent involved, to believe that the deliberations of literary prize-givers are no more governed by purely artistic considerations than are the profound and inevitable ruminations of voting members of the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences. I mention this because *The Shipping News* is an out-and-out crowd-pleaser, a book that will certainly not diminish the commercial value of the National Book Award even as that award (and the Pulitzer Prize) increases this book's sales.

The Princess of Tides

BY VERLYN KLINKENBORG

The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx

(Fireside/Touchstone, 337 pp., \$12 paper)

There is always, of course, a distinction to be made between a successful writer and the gravy that is ladled over that writer by the literary press. Recently, E. Annie Proulx (pronounced "proo") has been served up hot. Her first novel, *Postcards*, won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction in 1993—the first time a woman has won that prize. Her second novel, *The Shipping News*, won the 1993 National Book Award, and it has just been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Proulx herself is a copywriter's dream: a survivor, a jack-of-all-trades, an independent cuss, a backwoods literatus, a fisherperson, a hunter, a woman who writes with the wolves, longhand. When quoted by reporters she sounds a little ursine, and it can be hard to tell—given the gravy—how much of that is the bluntness of a writer caught unaware in the midst of

her private life and how much is good staging.

As the press ladles praise upon her, it praises itself, as it always does, for knowing a good thing when it sees one. The articles that have been written about Proulx, who is nearly 60, tend to celebrate the blush of fame, the transforming power of the media gaze, as if Proulx's main achievement were to have lived long enough to warrant attention at last. "These days," one reporter writes in *The Washington Post*, "the roughest thing in Proulx's life involves learning the myriad duties of a budding literary celebrity." Welcome to Valhalla.

You hear a lot of talk about the marketing value of the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize (and the Booker Prize, too, which Proulx was deterred from winning by not being British). That kind of talk makes you wonder whether marketing value hasn't become an asset

The *Shipping News* is the story of Quoye, a lumbering, prognathous ne'er-do-well who finally does do well when he leaves behind his dreary, incommensurable life in Mockingburg, New York, and returns to his ancestral country, the coast of Newfoundland, in the company of his young daughters, Bunny and Sunshine, and his quietly efficient, quietly lesbian aunt, Agnis Hamm, a yacht upholsterer. Quoye is freed from Mockingburg by the death of Petal Bear, his sexually incandescent wife, whose light shone equally upon all men, and by the double suicide of his parents, who left their suicide note—cut off by the beep—on Quoye's answering machine. In a town called Killick-Claw, Quoye finds competence and the respect of his neighbors and a good wife. The book's final sentence is this: "And it may be that love sometimes occurs without pain or misery." If this were the first sentence of the novel, the reader would know from the start what at first he only suspects: that *The Shipping News* is a fairy tale, a book that doesn't just happen to turn out happily but that plainly intends to turn out happily all the way, a book that is unstinting, almost, at times, forced, in its good cheer.

In Killick-Claw, Quoye goes to work for a newspaper called *The Gammy Bird*, a "forty-four-page tab printed on a thin

paper." Its pages are filled with fake ads, a homemaker's column written by an old fisherman named Billy Pretty, reports of the shipping news and local car wrecks—Quoy's beat—a scabrous gossip column called "Scruncheons" and a weekly series of articles on local sex abuse cases reported by a marooned Brit named B. Beaufield Nutbeem. "That's what sells this paper," says the managing editor, a scrofulous man named Tertius Card,

not columns and home hints. Nutbeem's sex stories with names and dates whenever possible. That was Jack's genius, to know people wanted this stuff. Of course every Newf paper does it now, but *Gammy Bird* was first to give names and grisly details.

"Jack" is Jack Buggit, the paper's owner, a lobster fisherman whose favorite oath is "cockadoodle Christ"—as in "Jesus Cockadoodle Christ"—and to whom Proulx is so obliged that at the end of the novel, when Jack, having drowned, is lying in his coffin, she cannot bear to kill him off:

A roar and screaming. Some stumbled back, some surged forward. Quoy pushed from the kitchen, saw a knot of arms reaching to help gray Jack back to the present, water dribbling from his mouth with each wrack of his chest. And across the room heard Bunny shout "He woke up!"

A novelist may do with her characters what she will, but in the resurrection of Buggit I found the clearest cause of a reluctance I had been feeling all the way through *The Shipping News*, the reluctance you feel when someone you scarcely know puts his arm around your shoulder and pushes you toward the door. *The Shipping News* is the very skillful work of a writer who has given her novel the shape of comedy, given it comic characters with comic names and comical utterances, and who places her characters in comic situations, but who is still uncertain whether the reader will detect that this is comedy. This has less to do with the dark substratum of much that is funny here—sex abuse and the general wrack of lives and the peculiarly personal violence of small-town existence—than it does with the narrator, whose voice is elliptical, often poetic and oddly detached. At times reading *The Shipping News* is a little like watching a silent film comedy accompanied by the wrong musical score: *The Gold Rush* with music by Stravinsky. Every now and then incongruous harmonies do occur, but the overall effect is puzzling.

In *The Shipping News*, as in *Postcards*, Proulx is a powerfully descriptive writer. She is drawn by landscape and by work, rather than by character, and in this trait she resembles no one so much as Wal-

lace Stegner. Set against the passion with which Proulx sees the natural world, and against the intricacy with which she explains the labors men and women impose upon themselves, her characters seem relatively unadorned, plain people marked by reluctance, although their plainness is exaggerated by the poetic extravagance of the narrator's voice. If you hearken mainly to the narrator's accent and rhythms in *Postcards*, for instance, you will scarcely feel the tragedy that overwhelms Loyal Blood, the farmboy who accidentally kills his girlfriend and is dislodged by that act into a lifetime of drifting. There is an optimistic amplitude to the narration in *Postcards* that has been replaced in *The Shipping News* with an impatient but often beautiful terseness. Here is a moment early in the book, just before Quoy's parents commit suicide:

It was spring. Sodden ground, smell of earth. The wind beat through twigs, gave off a greenish odor like struck flints. Colts-foot in the ditches; furious dabs of tulips stuttering in gardens. Slanting rain. Clock hands leapt to pellucid evenings. The sky riffled like cards in a chalk-white hand.

Proulx writes with unending fascination about the sea off Newfoundland. "The ocean twitched like a vast cloth spread over snakes." "The long horizon, the lunging, clotted sea like a swinging door opening, closing, opening."

Against that staccato poetry, which never quite fills out syntactically or rhythmically, there come the voices of Newfoundland, like Buggit's, talking about a fishing season full of quotas and allocations. "Einstein couldn't understand it. They've made a fucking cockadoodle mess out of it, those twits in Ottawa who don't know a lumpfish from their own arse." Or Pretty's, talking about a rock off Quoy's Point called The Comb. "Twelve points onto that rock. Or used to be. Was named after the old style of brimstone matches. They used to come in combs, all one piece along the bottom, twelve to a comb. You'd break one off. Sulfur stink. They called them stinkers—a comb of stinkers." Or the harbor-master's, whose name is Diddy Shovel, talking about a storm at sea:

You never hear the wind after that without you remember that banshee moan, remember the watery mountains, crests torn into foam, the poor ship groaning. Bad enough at any time, but this was the deep of winter and the cold was terrible, the ice formed on rail and rigging until vessels was carrying thousands of pounds of ice. The snow drove so hard it was just a roar of white outside these windows. Couldn't see the street

below. The sides of the houses to the northwest was plastered a foot thick with snow as hard as steel.

As for Quoy, he tends to think in headlines: MAN WALKS ACROSS PARKING LOT AT MODERATE PACE, MAN WITH HANGOVER LISTENS TO BOAT-BUILDER PROJECT VARIABLES, REPORTER LICKS EDITOR'S BOOT.

Unnumerable are the novels that make the human heart an abstract place, without work, without topography, with only the gravity provided by the emotions and the mind brooding upon them. That is not Proulx's way. She is obsessed by what people know about the worlds they inhabit. In *Postcards* you learn from Loyal Blood more than you could imagine wanting to know about how to remove human scent from coyote traps or how to find dinosaur tracks. In *The Shipping News* the subjects are fishing, maritime economy, boat-building, the running of a local newspaper, Canadian politics, yacht upholstery, harbor management and the curious tongue spoken by Newfoundlanders, not to mention knots.

There is a specificity to this world that allays the vague rumblings of Quoy's heart, still stricken by the worthless Petal Bear, whose last act, before she died, was to sell her daughters to a man in Connecticut. As the novel slides forward, Quoy is drawn closer and closer to a woman named Wavey Prowse, whom Proulx describes, not unkindly, as "an erasing of the human, female form," and in the end he marries her. Yet that isn't where the main current of the novel lies. There are other currents—the story of Quoy's aunt, Hamm, the stories of Bunny and Sunshine, the sagas of the Buggit and Quoy families, the roiling life of *The Gammy Bird*. But *The Shipping News* is really a novel about a man growing into his work, growing into a place he cannot have without the work he does there.

It is Hamm who brings Quoy back to Killick-Claw:

Fifteen she was when they had moved from Quoy's Point, 17 when the family left for the States, a drop in the tides of Newfoundlanders away from the outports, islands and hidden coves, rushing like water away from isolation, illiteracy, trousers made of worn upholstery fabric, no teeth, away from contorted thoughts and rough hands, from desperation.

She, too, has been freed to return by death, by the death of her lover, a woman named Warren, after whom she has named her dog. The Aunt's return to Killick-Claw and to Quoy's Point is a form of defiance. When she was young, she was raped by her brother, Quoy's

father. Her first act upon returning to the house where she was raised is to dump his ashes down the privy. "The thought that she, that his own son and grandchildren, would daily void their bodily wastes on his remains a thing that only she would know." The sole remaining ancestor on the Point is a crazy old cousin who hexes the house with charms made from knots, knots left lying across thresholds. The cousin tells Quoyle the secret Hamm has carried with her since her childhood. The undoing of that memory—the acknowledging of it—is just one of the redemptive surges that sweep across this novel as it hastens to its end, when all must be redeemed.

The past in this place was hard, hard times, as Pretty says, and the present is the time that will seem hard before long. Every comedy is underpinned with tragedy, and in this comedy the tragedy is everywhere, in the news, down the privy, on the seafloor, in the graveyards. And yet curiously I felt, when I finished *The Shipping News*, as though the resonance of both the comedy and the tragedy had leaked away. For all the pre-

cision of Proulx's writing, for all her "sky the straw-colored ichor that seeps from a wound," there is, in her ellipses, in her terseness, room for a vacuum to arise.

Reading this novel, I began to think of the ways in which a reader is lead, or misled, by a narrator's affections, which are often impossible to conceal. I realized that I could not detect this narrator's affections, besides her love for the play of water and light against the land. In *The Shipping News* the characters seem limited, not enlarged, by what goes unspoken. Even Quoyle. Despite the evident pleasures of this book, I found myself listening hard for an accumulating echo, looking, in emotional and dramatic terms, for what Proulx calls "the reeling gyroscopic effect of the earth's spin that creates wind and flow of weather, the countering backwashes and eddies of storms." But I did not hear it or find it or feel it.

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Koch goes much further. He offers us a Kremlin-manipulated conspiracy so vast and so monstrous as to demand a complete revision of our understanding of the Popular Front era. Yet much of Koch's evidence is frail; much of it is conjecture. Koch's overheated cold war triumphalism and his sarcastic personal portraits are poor guides to what the Popular Fronts were about.

What they were about can be understood only in terms of the politics of conviction, as it was rooted in a specific historical juncture. As the liberal heritage crumbled in Europe, the center ground would not hold. The Socialist movements of the nineteenth century—born out of the cardinal Enlightenment values of rationality, humanism, social justice, progress—had proposed blueprints for a future society reprieved from exploitation and war. But these blueprints remained pinned to the drawing board, unachieved. The moral collapse of the Socialist International in 1914, and the four-year holocaust that ensued, brought a bright-burning credibility to the revolutionary extremism of Lenin's Bolsheviks. By the 1930s, however, the prevailing image of Stalin's Russia among Western fellow-travelers was, paradoxically, not so much revolutionary as reformist. The Five-Year Plans were hailed as models of Fabian-style social engineering; and the USSR stood for "peace." The Enlightenment had at last come down from the sky.

The old complaints against Western capitalism had lost none of their vigor. This was the era of the Great Depression and mass unemployment; of unmitigated imperialism in Africa and Asia. Democracy was not for export. Fascism seized power in Italy, Portugal, Germany and Spain. The emergence of the Popular Fronts reflected the horror and the panic aroused by Hitler, as well as acute disillusionment with Anglo-French appeasement.

Koch barely accords this grim scenery a glance. His narrative is a succession of melodramatic close-ups apparently inspired by a determination to trash every passenger aboard the Moscow express. His central demon is the Comintern's master manipulator of Western dupes and foggy-minded idealists, the German Communist Willi Münzenberg. (Münzenberg is hardly an unknown or untreated figure; he is the subject of a biography by his collaborator and widow Babette Gross, and of other close scrutinies.) A broad-shouldered, foul-mouthed charmer with the face of a woodcutter from a sixteenth-century engraving, the much-loved Willi went about his work on behalf of the Com-

Assignment in Utopia

BY DAVID CAUTE

Double Lives: Spies and Writers in the Secret Soviet War of Ideas Against the West by Stephen Koch

(The Free Press, 419 pp., \$24.95)

More than fifty years have passed since the heyday of fellow-traveling, the era when the still youthful Soviet Union commanded the admiration of Western intellectuals, many of whom were neither Communist Party members nor, on inspection, Marxists. Blind in one eye and wearing a rose-tinted lens in the other, these privileged, flattered visitors to the Soviet Union excited bitterness among Soviet intellectuals with first-hand experience of the purges, the gulag and Thought Crime. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's novel, *The First Circle*, icily describes the big whitewash laid on for the benefit of an important foreign visitor, Mrs. R. The anguished cries of the prisoners she inspects are translated for her benefit as a unanimous protest against the oppression of blacks in the United States.

Later in the novel the Moscow correspondent of the fellow-traveling Parisian

newspaper *Libération* passes a neat, clean van carrying the word "meat" in four languages. He makes notes for an article describing the high standard of food hygiene in Moscow, unaware that the van is packed with political prisoners. Unaware? The fellow-traveler, in Solzhenitsyn's view, believes what he wants to believe. It is hard to read this novel without recalling the notorious passage from Sidney and Beatrice Webb's *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?*, in which the gullible Fabians are discussing the building of the White Sea Canal: "It is pleasant to think that the warmest appreciation was officially expressed of the success of the GPU, not merely in performing a great engineering feat, but in achieving a triumph of human regeneration."

The exploitation of reputable scholars and artists by Machiavellian Communist fronts and apparatchiks is an old, well-attested story. In *Double Lives* Stephen

intern with the élan of a chess master moving between a dozen simultaneous boards: newspapers, film, radio, books, magazines, the theater. Koch not only stresses the secret and covert aspects of Münzenberg's propaganda work, he also offers a hell's kitchen of the damned:

every resource of manipulation, from rudimentary group psychology to plain bribery, was used to keep these ranks of the famous and influential left safely Stalinist in everything *except* name.... Every device of vanity and venality, misused trust and intellectual obfuscation....

The Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Modern History has recently opened some of the Central Party files. Koch engaged a researcher, Professor Roman Shenin. These archives confirm, Koch reports, that Münzenberg and his lieutenants were attached to the foreign wing of the NKVD-KGB and Military Intelligence (GRU). In addition, "Münzenberg was affiliated with the Comintern's training schools for undercover agents and spies. His enterprises and his people were deep in recruitment for espionage." These are wide and formidable claims. For the time being, unfortunately, we are short of the specific information that would substantiate them. Such an intimate interlocking of functions would be, at the least, surprising. The Comintern knew that those of its agents involved in organizing propaganda fronts were high-profile targets for FBI and MI5 surveillance. Guy Liddell of MI5 had been tracking Münzenberg from early days.

While we await further chapter-and-verse, Koch displays manipulatory skills of his own in pursuit of guilt-by-association. Time and again the Cambridge and American spies—Blunt, Burgess, Philby and the Fields (Noel and Herta)—surface in Koch's narrative alongside intellectuals who were merely "innocents." Why? Because "the covert actions of which we speak began in ideas and ideals." But it takes more than an idea or an ideal to make a mole. Koch invites us to believe it was all one package, paid for by Moscow, gift-wrapped by Münzenberg: "... the unseen moral motivations of the Cambridge spies ... emerge as a kind of map ... of advanced British intellectual life in their era.... They were high Bloomsbury's children." In reality, however, the vast majority of fellow-traveling intellectuals emerged from a less glittering womb than the members of the elite Cambridge "Conversation Club" who styled themselves The Apostles. The new wave of pro-Soviet intellectuals was more likely to have been influenced by Shaw and Wells

than by Lytton Strachey. Nobody handed them half of a torn postcard with instructions to await the other half in the hands of an unknown controller.

Babette Gross, Münzenberg's widow, talked at length to Koch before her death. It has to be said that her testimony as reported by Koch does not invariably correspond to what she wrote in *Münzenberg*, which was first published in Stuttgart in 1967. "Every so often, talking with me in Munich, Babette Gross would drop a remark that made the foundations of the world seem to shift a little." Take the Sacco-Vanzetti case. "It was," she said with a dry shrug, "Münzenberg's idea." Yet Sacco and Vanzetti receive only one passing mention in Gross's book, and without reference to Münzenberg. It is possible, of course, that when Gross was interviewed by Koch she was prepared to reveal more than she had written; in which case Koch should have asked her why, and cited her answer.

Koch's Münzenberg was engaged in a vast Stalinist conspiracy of deception. Nothing was what it seemed: even Münzenberg's anti-fascism was always a sham. This principle is spectacularly applied to what Koch presents as the seminal event, or sham performance, in a covert collaboration between Hitler and Stalin dating back to 1933 but not fully grasped by historians. (Koch evidently knows what Hitler's leading biographer, Joachim Fest, failed to know.) This seminal event was the Reichstag fire of February 1933.

The fire occurred soon after Hitler became chancellor. The Reichstag, or Parliament, was burned down, probably by a deranged Dutchman. Hitler seized the pretext to allege a Communist conspiracy, to embark on mass arrests and to bury what remained of the democratic Weimar Republic. Münzenberg retaliated with a countertrial in London, which was rapidly staged in September 1933 to discredit the subsequent trial in Leipzig of three Bulgarian Communists, led by Georgi Dimitrov, and one German Communist.

Koch's claim is nothing less than sensational: "It would appear that Dimitrov's true assignment may well have been simply to enter Germany as conspicuously as possible and be arrested, arrested quite intentionally, in the days after the Reichstag fire." In other words the whole affair, including the suppression of the German Communist Party, was a charade orchestrated by Hitler and Stalin. "Six years before the Nazi-Soviet Pact, on the very first day of Hitler's power, the dictators were already secretly waltzing together, in full collaboration."

The subsequent anti-Nazi campaign organized by Münzenberg was merely a "cover."

So why didn't Münzenberg say as much when he later broke with the Comintern? Why did he rebel against the creeping collusion of the late 1930s, when Moscow handed over exiled German Communists to Berlin? Reading Koch is like being presented with new evidence that Jesus gave Judas a wink during the Last Supper. Koch's version of Münzenberg's "cover" covers the countertrial and the two *Brown Books* documenting the Hitler Terror, masterminded by Münzenberg and Otto Katz—even though Koch himself admits that, "Goebbels and the Leipzig judges were thrown entirely on the defensive ... the Nazis had been humiliated and shown up, and the civilized world properly rejoiced." Here Koch invites us to smell the rat, the "secret agenda." Dimitrov was delivering his anti-Nazi tirades from the Leipzig dock "under Hitler's unseen protection." This "Dimitrov Conspiracy" was perpetrated "not despite, but *through* the Soviet-sponsored 'anti-fascist movement.'"

This wild conjecture carries us way beyond the long-known evidence for a last-minute agreement between the Nazi and Soviet intelligence services, which provided for the eventual release of the Bulgarian Communists. Even here, the Nazi leadership was divided. Koch himself tells us that "Göring and the Nazi press raged in bewilderment" when the four Communist defendants were acquitted. Six weeks after their acquittal, when Moscow announced that it had conferred Soviet citizenship on the three Bulgarians, Göring gave an interview declaring that Dimitrov was too dangerous to be released. A few days later he felt compelled to dismiss rumors that he had been in conflict with the Führer.

Koch asks us to consider what Hitler gained out of this internationally humiliating super-charade. (We may well wonder.) He offers a "plausible hypothesis" that gallops into certainty. In short, "Hitler and the Communists had a common enemy," Ernst Röhm's S.A. "The secret but true purpose of the Leipzig Trial was to discredit the S.A., prior to its elimination.... The entire thrust of *The Brown Books* and the London Counter-Trial was to discredit the S.A. and in particular Röhm," thus clearing the ground for the massacre known as The Night of the Long Knives. This is a strange distortion of the obvious. Koch admits that Hitler himself was "much vilified" by Münzenberg's propaganda machine; and Göring and Goebbels—no friends of the S.A.—

were accused of collusion in the fire.

Obviously the Communists feared and excoriated the S.A., the million-strong vanguard of the Nazi terror. But even if, as Koch argues, Stalin shared with Hitler, Britain and France the aim of demilitarizing the S.A. and stabilizing the official German army, the Reichswehr, it does not follow that in mid-1933 "the true target of both dictators was [Ernst] Rohm." The Communists regarded the S.A. as Hitler's instrument. Hitler's bloody purge of the S.A., performed under pressure from the army, did not occur until June 30, 1934, ten months after Münzenberg's countertrial.

Koch's version of history carries the self-enclosed, hermetic quality of a Le Carré spy novel. We decent but naïve "Westerners" are constantly invited to suspend disbelief. The subtitle of Koch's book proclaims a "Secret Soviet War of Ideas Against the West," but this is cold war rhetoric nimbly back-dated. During the 1930s "the West" happened to include Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Franco's version of Spain, not forgetting a cluster of minor dictatorships. In Koch's narrative the domestic Communist parties of Western Europe lack flesh and blood. He achieves his effects by focusing his zoom lens on small groups of apparatchiks who are blown up into all-controlling demons. We leap back and forth across the time frame as in a novel.

Koch turns his attention to "the great propaganda fraud known as the Popular Front, which used the claims of 'anti-fascism' to keep enlightened sympathizers in line as the Great Terror ran its course." We are introduced to a "chic" and manipulative outfit repeatedly called, in defiance of French grammar, the "Rassemblement Universelle [sic] Populaire," whose "quiet eminence" was the exiled Münzenberg. On, then, to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935, which formally launched a global Popular Front strategy, embracing the Socialist parties (until recently scorned as "Social fascists") and reaching out to anti-Nazi liberals.

The political ground for the congress had been carefully prepared, though not according to Koch. "The delegates listened in obedient disbelief [to Dimitrov's speech].... Of course their outrage had been anticipated. Dimitrov understood that the new line would have to be stroked into place." This is nonsense. There was no "disbelief." In France a functioning unity pact between Communists and Socialists was already a year old, sponsored by the Comintern. Similar developments were already occurring in Spain, and among the exiles from the fascist states.

According to Koch, Dimitrov in his keynote speech "asked the delegates to recall the instructive tale of the Trojan horse, the hollow offering of peace filled with death. Ponder the meaning of that gesture, comrades. There is the truth of our new front." But the voice here is not Dimitrov's, merely Koch reverting to the sardonic-indirect. And on he goes, a paraphrasing ventriloquist: "If we Communists talk for the moment about cooperating with the lackeys of the capitalists, *naturally* we are deceiving them." This might seem a strange agenda to declare openly to the world's press, yet Koch gives as his source Dimitrov's speech, "The Working Class vs. Fascism." I can find none of Koch's imagery, nothing about "the hollow offering of peace, filled with death" in this speech. Dimitrov was urging the left to employ Trojan horse tactics against the fascists; the United Front of Communists and Socialists must operate "*outside and inside* the fascist organizations in Germany, Italy and other countries in which fascism possesses a mass basis."

Enter Otto Katz, otherwise called André Simon, "the master of the secret life ... Münzenberg's right hand in creating the Soviet's great anti-fascist campaign..." By birth a Sudeten German from Prague (where he was executed in 1952 as a "British spy"), Katz was undoubtedly a skillful orchestrator of the Comintern's compositions, but Koch insists that he also wrote the music. Take the case of Britain's Left Book Club, launched in March 1936 by the publisher Victor Gollancz with a selection panel consisting of John Strachey, Harold Laski and Gollancz himself. Koch dismisses all three as "front men": "In London the Left Book Club was summoned into existence under Katz's wise guidance and probable secret funding." Here the sole source given is an interview in 1986 with Paul Willert, described by Koch as a wartime "British intelligence and propaganda agent."

In fact, Gollancz himself put up the capital for the Left Book Club, paid Strachey two guineas for every manuscript that he read and remained in effective control throughout. Strachey, who was ideologically closest to orthodox communism, could not prevent Laski from roasting a Left Book Club book by the CPGB's ideologue, R. Palme Dutt. It was the Left Book Club that published Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Koch cites as a source Hugh Thomas's biography of John Strachey, but Katz / André Simon is nowhere to be found in Thomas. According to Koch, Strachey was "one of Münzenberg's best men in England," yet Thomas offers no hint of

close contact between them; and Babette Gross's *Münzenberg* does not mention Strachey (or Gollancz, or Laski), despite her dutiful listings. Why does Koch feel compelled to sneer at the Left Book Club as "Stalinist chic"? The phrase occurs twice within twelve lines. To argue that Katz and Münzenberg attempted to "Stalinize Bloomsbury taste" through the Left Book Club is bizarre: Bloomsbury was Cavalier, the Left Book Club was predominantly Roundhead.

By relentlessly listing intellectuals as Katz's protégés, Koch gives the impression of a helpless network of captivated or venal souls. Lillian Hellman, a sponsor of the New York radical newspaper *P.M.*, was "Otto's devoted political protégé and dear friend"; *P.M.*'s publisher, Ralph Ingersoll, was "besotted with Hellman." "Here too, Otto may have had his unseen place ... high-level agents of the apparatus ... could be found hovering near *P.M.* throughout its existence." This is sourced by a one-liner: "Information to the author from Ms. Patricia Bosworth." I have little sympathy for Hellman's double standards and Stalinist political postures, but it is futile to explain the pro-Popular Front press mainly in terms of personal vanity and string-pulling. What prevailed was the politics of widespread conviction. And what later tore the Popular Front ethos apart was the Nazi-Soviet pact.

In Britain Kingsley Martin, the editor of the pro-Popular Front periodical *New Statesmen & Nation*, vetoed a book review by Orwell on Spain without Katz et al. "hovering near" his desk. Martin believed what he believed rather than what Orwell believed. Six years later T.S. Eliot, no fellow-traveler, turned down *Animal Farm* on similarly strategic grounds: "... we have no conviction ... that this is the right point of view from which to criticize the political situation at the present time." In other words, Stalin was no pig called Napoleon until Hitler was put away. No hovering Katz was required to shape Eliot's judgment, although a hovering British Ministry of Information had warned another publisher, Jonathan Cape, off publishing Orwell's masterpiece. Communists enjoy no prerogative on strategic silences.

Koch discerns a cultural conspiracy servicing the political one: Münzenberg promoted modernist painting, theater and cinema to seduce the elite. It is certainly true that Münzenberg's distribution of films by Eisenstein and Pudovkin captivated the Western intelligentsia, but the main thrust of Soviet cultural propaganda in the West echoed the anti-modernist Socialist realism pro-

claimed by Zhdanov and Fadeyev. Even Brecht's modernism was held in deep suspicion. Koch reports that Picasso "would hang on the bankers' walls"; but Picasso and Léger were not likely to be found, even in cheap reproduction, on the walls of E. L. Doctorow's fictional Rosenberg family in *The Book of Daniel*. The left-wing, pro-Soviet intelligentsia of the Popular Front era devoured the solidly realist, politically progressive fiction of Heinrich Mann and Lion Feuchtwanger, the work of H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Sinclair Lewis and Maxim Gorky. Hemingway was about as modernist as left-wing literary taste would allow.

But Koch is not interested in the workers, the school teachers and the laboratory scientists who packed the ranks of

the Popular Fronts. Relentlessly he associates the fellow-traveling culture of the 1930s with glitz and glamour, with the "slick" and the "chic": "a Stalinized glamour culture must know all the best people; visit all the most interesting places, live in all the most perfect places, wear the most flawless clothes.... It must drop names, and drop the very best names...." Koch is constantly carried away by seething animosity: "*Beelite*. Lay it on. Just so long as the elite burns with injustice and gives the money to combat it. Which injustice? Why follow the leader." The mocking tone here is pointless, and counterproductive. A cheap style—"Here is how it worked. Way back in 1920..."—does not encourage richness of understanding.

The vast majority of Western Communists and pro-Soviet fellow-travelers did not live in "perfect places" or "wear the most flawless clothes" or "drink perfect martinis." We are dealing here with a mass movement of the working class and the intelligentsia. If they made serious errors of judgment about the Soviet Union in the era of the Five-Year Plans, those errors demand to be discussed in terms of the perennial loss of objectivity that occurs during a time of passionate ideological polarization. Koch's scathing judgments seem like a throwback to the cold war discourse that explained fellow-traveling in terms of psychological aberrations among misfits acting out nursery tantrums, anti-parental revenges and pseudo-rebellions.

Consider Koch's treatment of Erwin Piscator. By the mid-1920s the brilliant Marxist theater director "had formed a flourishing reputation as director of the *Volksbühne*, the Berlin National Theater, an institution funded by the Weimar government, and exactly the kind of liberal, altruistic operation the apparat wished to destroy." (The *Volksbühne*, incidentally, was not "the Berlin National Theatre," which is presumably Koch's term for the Prussian State Theater.) Koch now prepares us for a shabby maneuver by Piscator and Katz. "His

problem was leaving the *Volksbühne*. It had always treated Piscator in an exceptionally supportive way." Guaranteed a theater of his own by Katz-Münzenberg's International Workers' Aid, the unscrupulous Piscator "needed some way to... make his career move look like a saintly act." According to Koch, Piscator and Katz therefore fabricated a row that would look like an injustice by the *Volksbühne* against the director.

Koch's cited source is John Willett's *The Theater of Erwin Piscator*. But Willett explains that Piscator, in the autumn of 1926, had come into serious conflict with conservative opinion when he staged a politically and aesthetically radical production of Schiller's *Die Räuber* at the State Theater. Questions had been asked in the Prussian State Assembly, and two further Piscator productions were canceled. Returning to the *Volksbühne*, where he staged a bruisingly Marxist-modernist production of *Gewitter über Gottland*, he was publicly accused by the management of abusing artistic freedom and violating the *Volksbühne*'s "principle of political neutrality." A further conflict, resulting from Piscator's collaboration with the playwright Ernst Toller, and involving Katz, brought Piscator's work for the *Volksbühne* to an end. Willett comments: "The crunch had come..."—and adds that Piscator made a meal of it. This contrasts rather starkly with Koch's verdict on the Toller Affair: "Unfortunately no appropriate injustice was on hand. So one had to be concocted."

André Malraux also gets it in the neck from Koch, although he renounced communism with a penetrating observation: "We had believed that in becoming less French a man becomes more human. Now we know that he simply becomes more Russian." Koch is probably right that Malraux fantasized about his involvement in the early stages of the Chinese revolution, but he engages in laborious overkill concerning the brief trip by Malraux and André Gide to Berlin in January 1934 on behalf of Dimitroff and his imprisoned colleagues.

When they arrived in the German capital, Malraux and Gide found no one to receive them; and lacking the anticipated high-level conversation, Gide addressed a letter to Goebbels. In his *Antimemoirs* Malraux merely reports that Hitler "refused" to receive them. But Koch seizes on a passage by Malraux's biographer, Jean Lacouture, reporting a conversational claim by Malraux that he had met with Goebbels in January 1934. Lacouture found this story "less than entirely authentic." Koch goes further: it is "a fraud." And Malraux's motive for the

Hotel Window

Aura of absence, vertigo of non-being—
could I ever express what happened?
It was nothing, really, or next to nothing.

I was standing at the window at dusk
watching the cabs or the ghosts of cabs
lining up on the other side of the street

like yellow ferryboats waiting to cross
a great divide. All afternoon the doorman
whistled through the shadows, Charon

slamming doors and shouting orders
at traffic piling up along the curb.
People got into cars and disappeared—

ordinary people, tourists, businessmen—
while fog thickened the city's features
and emptied out the color. I don't know

how long I stood there as darkness
inhabited air itself, but suddenly,
when it happened, everything seemed dis-

jointed, charged with non-existence,
as if a vast, drowned lake was rising
invisibly—permanently—from the ground.

At the same time nothing really changed,
footsteps still echoed in the hallway
and laughter flared up the stairwell,

the passengers flinging themselves into cabs
never noticed they were setting forth
on a voyage away from their bodies.

I felt within a sickening emptiness—
intangible, unruly—and I remember
lying down on the floor of the room...

Then the phone rang and it was over.
Nothing happened—it took only a moment—
and it was dizzying, relentless, eternal.

EDWARD HIRSCH

concoction? "... to cover the stinging recognition, still perhaps felt forty years later, that in his political vanity he had been used; that his aspiration (shared by Gide) to assume the mantle of Victor Hugo and Emile Zola as the *grand homme des* [sic] *lettres*, conscience of Europe, had been made ridiculous." More sneers are in the pipeline: Malraux's semidocumentary novel, *Days of Contempt*, "had been written to order from Münzenberg with the steady 'assistance' of two Katz minions, Manes Sperber and Willi Bredel." Why "minions"? Indeed, Bredel had escaped from the kind of Nazi prison described in Malraux's novel. Lacouture, much quoted by Koch, actually says: "Malraux was not exactly the type of writer who works 'to order.'" Had Malraux written the novel at the behest of Münzenberg or an associate? Lacouture concludes that evidence is lacking.

Now add lust to the conspiracy. Koch engages in *cherchez la femme fatale* with zest. "The Russian writer and historian Nina Berberova writes with astringent authority about a cohort of agents or near-agents, the women whom she calls the 'Ladies of the Kremlin.'" (The cited reference is Berberova's *Histoire de la baronne Boudberg*, published in 1988.) Take the case of the renowned novelist and pacifist Romain Rolland, who had excoriated the Bolshevik Terror and then moved sharply toward a fellow-traveling position in the late '20s. These motions were the product of passionate conviction and partially shadowed those of Rolland's admired friend, Maxim Gorky—but Koch is more interested in the role of Maria Pavlova Koudachova, Rolland's half-French, half-Russian secretary, whom he married in 1934 and whom Koch describes as "an agent directly under Soviet secret service control" who "sought out the novelist in Switzerland and there began what was her entire life's work: insinuating herself into every corner of [Rolland's] existence and managing it for the apparat." In short, Koudachova fastened the vain old writer's meandering brain between her thighs.

What is the evidence? In *Assignment in Utopia* (1936) Eugene Lyons reported a visit to Rolland in Villeneuve; he found the great man evasive about Soviet terror, and insistent that the fight against Nazism must take priority. "His Soviet Russian wife, young, petite, attractive, was on the alert to divert the discussion." Lyons concluded that she was a Stalinist shielding Rolland against knowledge of Stalin's infamy. Koch also cites David James Fisher's recent intellectual biography of Rolland, which refers to Koudachova as Marie Koudachef and dates her

appointment as Rolland's secretary in 1929, i.e., after Rolland's dramatic swing toward Comintern-led fronts. According to Koch, Fisher has "documented" her role in "manipulating Rolland's intellectual life," but I find no such thing "documented" in Fisher beyond his neutral report of Henri Guilbeaux's allegation, published in 1937, that Koudachova had been trained in Moscow to take control of Rolland. Koch himself admits that Guilbeaux was an embittered, crypto-fascist source—a point that I made thirty years ago in *Communism and the French Intellectuals*.

I see little evidence that Rolland remained anything other than his own man. Writing to Henri Barbusse in July 1932, he complained about Münzenberg's "extraordinary unscrupulousness (*sans-gêne inouï*)" in abusing the conditional commitments of writers by employing their names for quite separate causes. Rolland's strictures extended also to Münzenberg's aide, Louis Gibarti. If Koudachova was working, as Koch alleges, for Gibarti, she was certainly making a hash of it. In 1937 Rolland noted privately that the USSR was a regime of "the most absolute arbitrary power—I stifle the need to say it and to write it." Hitler was the reason, not a Kremlin Lady.

Koch also targets several American writers with his habitual emphasis on personal vanity. Of Dorothy Parker, he writes: "Through the chic of her hard-left commitments, Parker could both validate her love of glamour, and mask it with an appropriate look of disdain for all the vanities." Hemingway is next into the pillory: a swaggering sadist. Here Koch leads us into a tangled story of the Spanish Civil War involving Hemingway, Dos Passos and the secret execution of Dos Passos's friend, José Robles Villa. When Hemingway broke the news to Dos Passos at the behest of Josephine Herbst, who was "inside the apparatus," he executed his task with "sadism," while Herbst "stood at a distance, anonymous and safe, watching her handiwork take its cruel effect." Koch devotes four pages to Josephine Herbst's iniquity and to Hemingway's swagging—though Dos Passos's biographer, Townsend Ludington, shrugs off the incident as relatively trivial. The significant point, surely, is that Hemingway wanted to press ahead with the filming of *The Spanish Earth* and took pride in what he believed to be his status as a confidant of the Republican leadership (see Carlos Baker's *Hemingway*, p. 368).

If, as Koch insists, the Comintern hoped to reify this writer into the leading literary fellow-traveler of his generation, it failed. Hemingway's portrait of the French Communist leader André

Marty in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was scarcely what the apparat desired; he was assailed in the *Daily Worker* by Mike Gold as "mutilated by his class egotism ... the poverty of his mind." Likewise, Hemingway's earlier play, *The Fifth Column*, brought no joy to the Communists; none of the Popular Front angels was prepared to stage it.

In conclusion, one notes that Communists have not been alone in manipulating the genuine convictions of intellectuals in an era of passionate ideological polarization. During the 1950s and 1960s the CIA covertly penetrated the Congress for Cultural Freedom and a host of apparently independent American bodies, including the National Student Association, the Institute of International Labor Research, the American Newspaper Guild and the National Council of Churches. The London magazine *Encounter* was financed through dummy foundations from 1950 until 1964. The former CIA agent, Thomas W. Braden, candidly explained the strategy in the *Saturday Evening Post* of May 20, 1967:

Use legitimate, existing organizations; disguise the extent of American interest; protect the integrity of the organization by not requiring it to support every aspect of official American policy.

Yet in my view these manipulations do not erode the bedrock of liberal conviction that Allen Dulles and his apparatchiks exploited. Without that conviction intrigues cannot function. The prime question about the Western Communists and fellow-travelers in the 1930s is why they believed what they believed. History provides better answers than psychopathology. The Popular Fronts were not merely a cynical charade, a pied-piping of the innocents. They served an anti-fascist domestic function that did not necessarily involve Stalin-worship; a similar logic later sustained the wartime military alliance from 1941 to 1945. Nor did pro-Soviet sentiment necessarily involve an abandonment of the individual's critical faculties. In 1934 Malraux delivered a spectacularly unorthodox lecture on literature in Moscow. The spider's web described by Koch could not prevent André Gide from publishing his devastating critique of the USSR; the apparat could not stifle the critical faculties of Dos Passos, Orwell and Malraux. Willi Münzenberg himself was murdered in 1940, for choking on the Hitler-Stalin pact.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Madness

ON HIS FIRST NIGHT AS CO-HOST of CNN's "Crossfire," TNR's Michael Kinsley was startled by an agitated voice blaring in his plastic earpiece: "Get mad! Get mad!" It was the show's producer, trying to goad Kinsley into combat. If only someone would shout "Get mad!" into Bill Clinton's ear a little more often. Or maybe "Stay mad!" Clinton's aides say he does ventilate his temper at them, at least privately. Publicly, too, he shows no end of passion about the unfairness of the health care system, or the unfairness (to him) of the press corps. But his rage invariably gives way to a grinning attempt to make amends. This, apparently, has been a lifelong character trait. As Clinton's mother, Virginia Kelley, wrote of her sons in her memoir: "Bill and Roger and I are all alike.... When we walk into a room, we want to win that room over. Some would even say we *need* to win that room over.... If there are 100 people in a room and ninety-nine of them love us and one doesn't, we'll spend all night trying to figure out why that one hasn't been enlightened."

AS A RESULT, FEW PEOPLE FEAR Clinton's ire, while many doubt his resolve—especially in international affairs. A perennial complaint of foreign policy mavens is that Americans tend to "demonize" hostile foreign leaders or forces: the Soviets, Castro, Qaddafi, Noriega, the butchers of Tiananmen Square. But outrage can serve at least two purposes: it can add moral clarity to the assertion of a U.S. interest, and it can make the world's bullies think twice about messing with America. Call it constructive enagement. It is just this quality that has been missing from Clinton's statements about the Haitian military or the Bosnian Serbs. Only the alleged trading abuses of Japan really seem to get the president's goat.

TAKE THE SMALL BUT REVEALING recent tiff between Clinton and CNN reporter Christiane Amanpour. Speaking from Sarajevo during Clinton's recent "global news conference," Amanpour prodded the president about his "constant flip-flops" on Bosnia. Clinton reddened. "There have been no constant flip-flops, madam," he retorted.

But within minutes, Clinton flip-flopped on his flip-flopping. Smiling, he called Ahmanpour's coverage of Bosnia "fabulous." "She's done a great service for the whole world on that," he said. "I do not blame her for being mad at me, but I'm doing the best I can...." Ahmanpour was right about Bosnia and Clinton was wrong (except when he was praising her reporting). But he could have stuck to his guns, at least for the rest of the show. And obviously his anger was more sincere than his lame post hoc suck-up. Can Bill Clinton stand up to Kim Il Sung, pundits fret, if he won't stand up to the Bosnian Serbs, or the Somali warlords? What if he can't even stand up to a reporter from CNN?

IT HAS NOW REACHED the point where Bill Clinton's most devastating foreign policy critic may be Bill Clinton. When human rights activist Randall Robinson went on a hunger strike to protest the administration's Haiti policy, Clinton piped up to the effect that Robinson was right to do so because the policy hadn't worked. During the CNN press conference Clinton mused: "You know, we could have gotten less criticism in a way if we had just said, 'This problem and this problem and this problem don't involve our vital interests; therefore we will not commit our prestige or our efforts.'" Well, yeah, he could have tried that. Or how about, "This problem *does* involve our vital interests and we *will* commit our prestige and our efforts?"

CLINTON, HOWEVER, CAN'T MAKE such choices, because he is unguided by any conception of national interest, moral or strategic. That's why the president is unable to sort the competing claims of domestic pressure groups about Haiti. To date he has embraced just about every conceivable position on the issue. During the 1992 campaign he labeled Haitian refugees political victims deserving of U.S. asylum. Upon assuming office he reversed himself 180 degrees. At the moment he is trying to counter Robinson's and the Congressional Black Caucus's charges of racism without letting so many Haitians into Florida that the state gets swamped and turns against him in the 1996 election. As for events on the island itself, Clinton has steered the United States into an impending choice between accepting an embarrassing deadlock in a country crippled by sanctions, or using force to oust the military from power and reinstate President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

WOULD CLINTON EVER PULL THE trigger? The situation is beginning to look eerily like the Reagan-Bush battle with Panama's Manuel Antonio Noriega. In each case, for two years the United States tried sanctions and negotiations to persuade a Caribbean general and his henchmen to step aside and permit elected but dubious characters to assume the presidency. At a crucial moment in the middle of each crisis, American forces approached the scene and then backed down—in Panama, the October 1989 coup against Noriega; in Haiti, the debacle of the *Harlan County*. In Panama, the initial reluctance to use force probably made intervening more costly by the time

Bush finally sent in the Army and Marines in December 1989. But it also made the intervention appear more legitimate, since America had exhausted all means short of war—and since the United States could point to the security of the Panama Canal as a vital interest in the

region. Another key ingredient of the Bush strategy, however, was demonization. Bush seemed genuinely mad at the pesky Noriega and hyped the drug charges against him to make sure that the American people got mad, too.

CLINTON COULD ARTICULATE AT least two U.S. interests if he finally decides to send in the Marines: to keep Haitian General Raoul Cedras from demonstrating that a military clique can successfully buck the hemispheric trend to democracy, and to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe that could wash up on our shores. No one should overstate the likely permanent benefits to Haiti's toxic political culture from even a prolonged U.S. occupation. After all, the Marines occupied Haiti from 1915 to 1934, then handed over the country to the forerunner of the current army. In Panama, a former Noriega crony has just been elected president. And in Grenada, which U.S. troops liberated from a Marxist group in 1983, the government has just restored diplomatic relations with Cuba. Still, imagine where Panama or Grenada would be today if the United States hadn't acted. At least today's backsliders were freely elected in countries no longer plagued by military extremists. Panamanians and Grenadans seem frustrated because we didn't stay involved *enough* (with financial aid) in their internal affairs. Such an ambiguous outcome probably awaits any rescue mission Clinton might dispatch to Haiti. But first, he'll have to get mad.

CHARLES LANE

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MEMBER OF CONGRESS...
WHO WOULDN'T ENVY
THESE RATINGS?



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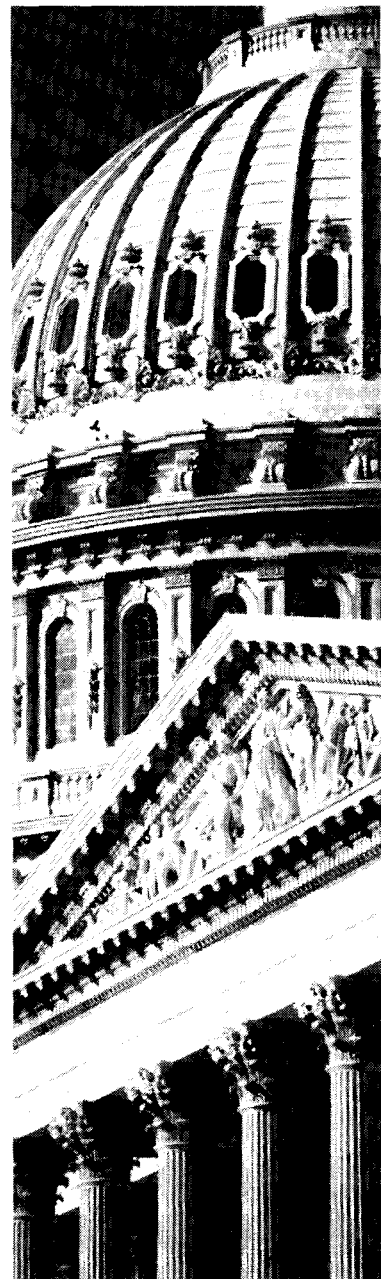
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Satisfaction with
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PHYSICIANS**
83%

Satisfaction with
**MANAGED CARE
OVERALL**
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